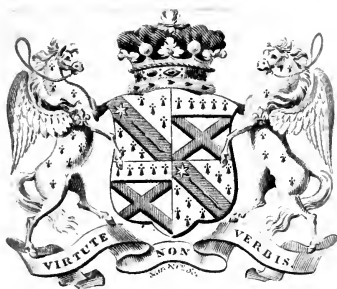




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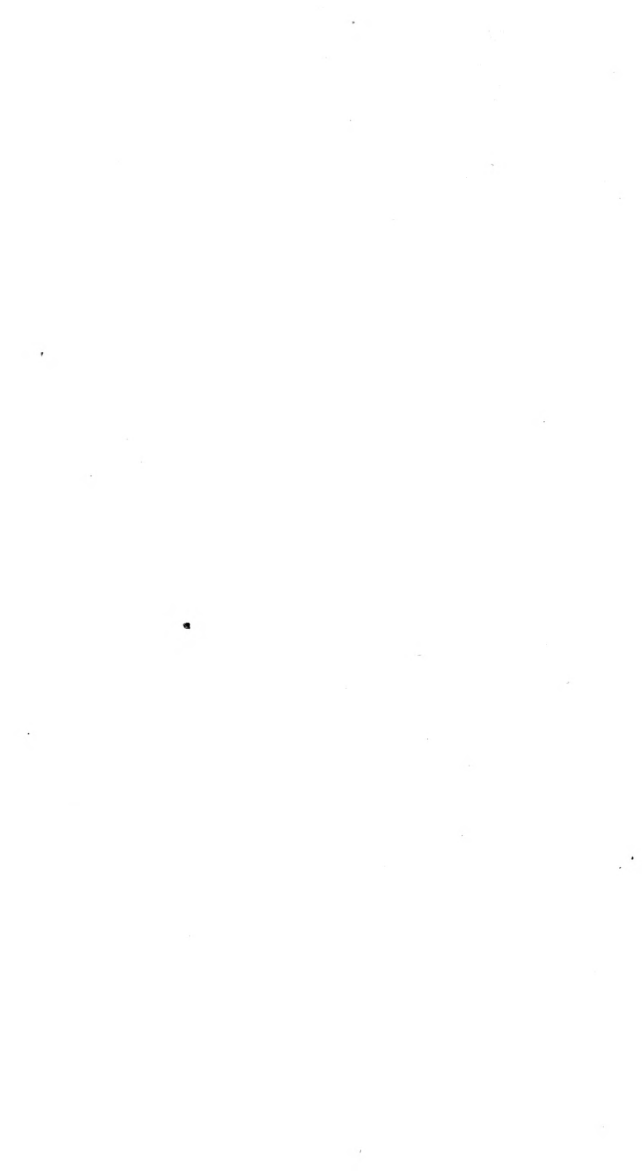


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VITTORIA COLONNA:

A TALE OF ROME,

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

**WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH:
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VITTORIA COLONNA.

CHAPTER I.

“Io lascero Ruggiero in questo caldo,
E giro in Scozia a ritrovar Rinaldo.”

ARIOSTO.

OUR narrative must now revert to Colone Duvivier, whom it left a mourner over the remains of the gallant Latour. In despite of his brilliant, but partial victory, he received an order on the following morning to abandon Nepi altogether, and fall back upon Civita Castellana. Mack, after a defeat, which was prevented from being general or total by the

scanty numbers of his enemies, retired to the heights of Calvi ; from whence, still redoubtable, he menaced the centre of the French line. This occasioned the retrograde movement of those so lately conquerors at Nepi, not less to their extreme disappointment than to that of their commander. Not only Nepi, but Civita Castellana itself, was abandoned by the prudent Championnet, who foresaw that, with a skill and science which Mack had learned from the short campaign and his late defeat, the next efforts of the Neapolitans would be directed upon Terni, the very centre and headquarters of the French.

The discontent and ill-humour of Duvivier were excited by these manœuvres, of the purport of which, stationed on the extreme wing of the army, he could scarcely judge. In this mood he was upon his march to Narni, after abandoning Civita,—blind to the beauties of a scene, unrivalled perhaps throughout the globe for the picturesque ; and although some-

what shorn of its beauty by the wintry season of the year, the military force concentrated in these solitudes, shed upon them a spirit and liveliness that even summer could not impart. From the flag-crowned eminences that rose high above the road, down to the classic stream which, its brawl unheard, wound far in the vale below, the declivity was crowded with those who filled the ranks or followed the steps of the army. High up, just covered by the brow, many battalions were under arms, whilst their white tents occupied the greenest and least declivous spots beneath them. The winding mountain road itself, over which at intervals the bodies of troops moved pressing to the centre, offered a well-known and beautiful adjunct to the picturesque, as they appeared and disappeared to the eye. The distant town of Narni terminated the view up the valley, its walls and habitations stretching down the ravine to the Tiber, which there was spanned by the noble arch, built over it by Augustus Cæ-

sar. Casting but sad and hasty glances upon a scene which looked *from* Rome, the Colonel at length reached Narni with his division.

Here he encountered crowds, not only of his military comrades but of the Roman republicans, who had wisely fled with the French and tarried within the circuit of their camp, alarmed not a little at present by its being so suddenly narrowed, and by the retrograde movements of their allies. He was soon surrounded with questions and salutations, and could scarcely satisfy the melancholy curiosity of his comrades respecting the fate of Latour D'Auvergne. In comparison with this loss, the retreat and jeopardy of the army seemed trifling ; and the skill and strategic manœuvres of Championnet escaped the criticism of his soldiers, so immersed was every thought in the fall of its first veteran.

Extricating himself at length from the crowd and questions of his countrymen, the Colonel went in search of some refreshment. He was

stopped in his progress by a functionary of the Roman republic, who, seemingly not in very good case in despite of his office, retained all its paraphernalia still about his person. It was Maldura, the ancient *chirurgo*, whom Duvivier's interest had so unseasonably promoted from the humble gains of his shop and profession, to the dangerous eminence of office.

“*Date obolum, Colonello mio,*” said poor Maldura.

“Has the fate of Belisarius overtaken you too, Giambattista Maldura?” said Duvivier.

“Even so. I am too old to serve with my fellow-refugees in the ranks of the Roman legion, and so am but a starving *Ædile*. *Ma è brava, nostra legione, sapete,*—’tis a gallant legion; our newly formed Roman one,” added the old apothecary, forgetting his hunger in the national pride excited by so novel a circumstance as a gallant band of Romans.

“Not braver troops in the army than the Roman legion,” said Duvivier, who felt espe-

cial interest in Roman worth. "Its commander, the Prince of Santa Croce, was severely wounded in the late affair, leading on the legion to the charge."

"*Si, per Bacco,*"* exclaimed the grand *Ædile*.

"But you spoke just now of hunger, my friend."

"In truth did I," said the old man, placing his hands upon his sides.

"And I would remedy this inconvenience

* Bacchus is the only divinity, heathen or Christian, which the Church allows to the vulgar adoration of its subjects: a wise exception, not only as it affords a harmless, expressive, convivial, and triumphant oath, but as indeed it would be impossible to eradicate the name from the grateful mouths of the people.—There is a fine ode by Baptiste Rousseau, which paints the true claim of the old deity to remain the object of popular invocation:—

"Prends part à la juste louange
De ce dieu si cher aux guerriers,
Qui, convert de mille lauriers
Moissonnés jusqu' aux bords du Gange,
A trouvé mille fois plus grand
D'être le dieu de la vendange,
Que de n'être qu'un conquérant."

of yours myself," rejoined the Colonel, "but that, I think, a hamper of provender awaits you yonder. It came from Rome, no doubt from your sister and the pretty Mariella. How it escaped Mack's patrol is beyond my conceptions. But for certain it reached our outposts, and came hither with us."

"*Oh, giubilate!*" cried the Ædile; "I came away without my garment,—and there it is; I see Giannino, our domestic.—You may have no quarters prepared, Colonel, and most certainly not so good a dinner as yon ass bears. Will you partake of my repast; mayhap the *ciuccio* bringeth news as well as provender, from Rome."

"A right welcome offer," said Duvivier.

"Yonder is my *portone*," said the Ædile, pointing to his lodgings, as he strode eagerly across the piazza, to the place where Giannino stood gaping and questioning for Maldura, the grand Ædile, &c. of the Republic.

Duvivier mounted the apartment of his for-

mer host, and was soon followed by that personage himself, bearing in his treasure, which, besides a seasonable bag of crowns, consisted of a *gallinaccio*, or turkey, of enormous dimensions,—some other choice specimens of Roman provender, with a world of sweetmeats and confectionary, *dolce*, as they are called, which, at the period of Christmas, are universally prepared in extravagant abundance, sent from friend to friend, and at times from one end of Italy to the other. The Grand *Ædile* was enraptured with this hoard of sweetmeats, and the thoughtfulness of the womankind in despatching them; and after having first carefully ordered the *gallinaccio* to the fire, proceeded to taste and pass judgment upon each specimen, expatiating more especially upon a huge plum-cake, as he addressed it, which was intended, no doubt, and was to have been preserved for the Christmas banquet.

The Colonel beheld this singular devotion, on the part of Maldura, with extreme impatience,

the more so as he saw a letter which the hamper contained, flung aside, until the more interesting *dolce* were examined. At Duvivier's expostulation, the *Ædile* opened the epistle, wondering, at the same time, who could be the scribe, since to convey intelligence by the pen was far above the acquirements of Altomira or Mariella. Some kind priest, however, had acted amanuensis, for it appeared to be Altomira's dictation.

It contained a vast deal of news, already known, or little interesting to the reader. Part of it, however, was extremely so to Duvivier, as it concluded with a full, or rather an exaggerated account of all that had befallen Vittoria since her last interview with him, and his bold escape,—the prolonged sanity of the Prince—the opportune coming of the Cardinal—the seclusion of Vittoria and of her parent—no one permitted to approach either. Finally, it added the reports that King Ferdinand had condemned the Signora Colonna to exile, con-

fiscation, death, and several more incompatible punishments, if she refused instantly to take the veil :—All this the Grand Ædile repeated from his epistle, with a countenance of mingled terror and importance.

Duvivier heard, and paced the room in rage and irresolution. Terror was not a sentiment that the time or his temper allowed of. Indeed all that had occurred he might have expected ; nay, worse, had not his mind been too actively employed to allow leisure for imagining probabilities. The idea of absenting himself, of hurrying into Rome, in despite of the enemy who guarded and garrisoned it, seemed to him an easy achievement. But to leave the army at such a moment was impossible. If an engagement were to take place while he was away, it would be inevitable and everlasting dishonour. He rejected the thought ; but none other presented itself to allay his impatience, and he recurred to it as often as he drove it from his mind. At length he deter-

mined to learn, if he could with any safety absent himself; and he set forth for that purpose, leaving Maldura in the midst of his *dolce*, and in the pleasing expectation of his *gallinaccio*.

After being some time away, the Colonel returned just as Maldura's patience was evaporating. He had formed his resolution. The Austrian General was quiet at Calvi, and had even intrenched himself in his position—a precaution which seemed to preclude any idea of immediate attack, or offensive motions on his part. Macdonald had allowed the Colonel leave for a day or two; and Duvivier returned to the attack of the *Ædile's* turkey, with the intention of setting forth for Rome immediately after. This intention, however, he communicated not even to the good apothecary; and the first star of night saw the Colonel and the faithful Forêt retrace with speed the road to Civita, whence it was their purpose to diverge amongst the hills,—gain the open Campagna, far from any road,—avoid in crossing its

waste during the following day the Neapolitan troops, and reach the walls of Rome at the twilight hour, which would enable them to enter without discovery.

So far they successfully accomplished their project, having surmounted various obstacles in their passage across the Campagna, not the least of which was the Teveroni, of old the Anio, which they avoided crossing at one of its guarded and castellated bridges, and which they were consequently obliged to swim. On approaching Rome, they kept still to the southward, that they might enter the city by its most uninhabited point. Had they been of the classic committee of the Pantheon, they would have preferred no doubt stretching farther, that they might stop—

“ *Ad veteres arcus, madidamque Capenam,*”

and seek refuge and concealment in the famed Egerian grot. But convenience ranked above association with these soldiers, and they accord-

ingly lurked contented until dark amongst the vineyards around the Porta Latina.

To scale the walls of Rome was no very adventurous feat, their bulwarks being no longer considered available as defence against other than smugglers of contraband provision. No fosse nor moat forbids approach to their very base, round which, on the contrary, runs a road, traversed from time to time by herds of long-horned oxen, or perhaps by a solitary *caratella*. The circuit of Aurelian's demarkation has not since been changed or circumscribed; and the repairs executed by the pontiffs may, with care, be traced and recognised at intervals between the more dusky and revered relics of imperial masonry. At almost every angle of the wall there is a square turret; and, between these, frequent abutments, which render such an attempt as that at present meditated by the two French soldiers feasible. Here and there too, the tufus stone of ancient Roman building had yielded to the action of the air, affording

a convenient stepping place to the clamberer. The early December night no sooner afforded the necessary concealment, than the Colonel and Forêt emerged from their lurking place, sprung up the walls, and in a few instants both were within the sacred circuit.

Although not habited in their uniforms, the Frenchmen were still far from disguised. Such precaution they either scorned or thought unnecessary ; or, perhaps, regarding as a possible occurrence the event of their capture, and the mean fate, which, as spies, then awaited them, they avoided assuming the complete disguise which would favour the idea of their being such. Their military undress, moreover, was well calculated to pass without attracting notice in a city garrisoned by the troops of another nation. By the unfrequented road from the convent of Santa Croce, they gained the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, thence down the hollow and narrow street to which the modern Romans have given the name of

Suburra, though antiquarians differ altogether from this tradition of topography. Ascending the Quirinal at the back of the Consulta and the Rospiglione palace, they reached the great square of Monte Cavallo, before the palace, doomed one day to be the sacred habitation of the head of the Church, next the profane head-quarters of a republican commandant, now preserved unoccupied by the piety of Ferdinand for the reception of the Pontiff, whom he had invited to revisit Rome upon the wings of the carrier-cherubim.

This was rather fortunate for our adventurers, who thus found Monte Cavallo in the solitude which they desired, the few Neapolitans that garrisoned the city directing their attention towards Walter and the Castle of St. Angelo, instead of filling the convent and the palaces of the Quirinal. They met with neither question nor impediment in gaining the gardens of the Colonna palace; and with an exertion, similar to that which had introduced

them within the walls of Rome, Duvivier found himself and his follower within the more hallowed precincts of his mistress's abode.

It had been a beautiful evening—the very evening on which Vittoria, by the subtle suggestion of Fra Tommaso, had signified to the Cardinal her willingness to purchase liberty by acquiescence to his wishes, and those of the Commission. Cardinal Colonna had retired perplexed, a circumstance that had not escaped the observation, though its cause baffled the conjectures of his niece. With these and other thoughts occupied, she had watched, whilst light permitted, the garden and its pavilion sunk in gloomy shade, and the gay effect of the setting sun upon the more lofty palaces of the Quirinal. Domenico's declaration, above all, struck her, that he had not since seen the Prince, that no one had been permitted to approach or behold him. A thousand sinister suspicions rose in her mind, each of which swelled into a presentiment as

she dwelt upon them with fear. She meditated various plans, with her own inability to execute any of them ; and then reverted to Duvivier—perhaps a prisoner or a fugitive. Would the French prove at length victorious ; or should she ever hear or see Eugene again ?

He was at the time entering the gardens. It was chill, clear, and starlight. All circumstances without seemed favourable to the yet vague intentions of the lover, whose first object was to see his mistress. This could be effected but by entering the palace, and how far this could be done with success was impossible to tell. The Colonel was well acquainted with the internal arrangement of the mansion ; moreover, he relied upon Domenico, who was wont to traverse and lord it o'er its spacious halls, unrivalled and alone. That Cardinal Colonna had made it his place of abode, or that the Prince was separated from his daughter, he could not have supposed.

Stationing Forêt below, Duvivier ascended

the steps to the elevated gallery, on which the windows of the cabinet, and the adjoining apartments opened. It was by this he had made his escape from the infuriate Prince. To his surprise the cabinet seemed uninhabited, although sounds proceeded from no very distant apartment. He laid his hand upon the bolt to admit himself silently, when steps were heard to advance on the creaking *parquet* within. Duvivier drew back. Those from within approached the window. The Colonel placed himself on the ledge outside the balustrade, screened by a projection of the building.

The doors were in an instant flung open, and two persons walked forth upon the gallery or terrace.

“The air of a sick chamber is to me worse than the stagnant vapours of the marshes,” observed one of them, as he seemed eagerly to imbibe the fresh breeze of the night.

“And this, I fear, is the chamber of death,” was the reply of the other.

“ Think you so ? And yet he seems sane and lively.”

“ It is the last reviving glimmer of the lamp ere it utterly goes out. Prolonged sanity, and mental vigour, is an effort, in this instance, that nature cannot survive.”

“ What then would you recommend ?”

“ That the Prince be calmed, and his wishes complied with, in allowing his daughter to approach him.”

“ Not to preserve the hat I wear will I cut short the frail thread of a brother's life, by admitting that virago to him—that unworthy daughter of our house. What she hath planned and dared I blush to tell ; and, because since guarded from ruin, she is full of grief ; she would overwhelm the Prince with lamentations,—urge him to redress her wrongs,—perhaps persuade the weak, old man to call in my brothers of the Council, and unsay all that has been said. No, no, it must not be thought of whilst he remains sane. But mark me,—when

the intellects fail, then his daughter shall approach him—not till then ; the contrary would breed disquiet, and perhaps be fatal. The moment that the senses sink to languor let me be warned, and I will give orders that the Signora descend.”

“ If the senses fail but with expiring life, as is possible, could your Eminence hold to such a resolution ?”

“ Speak no more of it, sir ; you exaggerate the danger:”—here the Cardinal paused a little; and after a moment drew the physician—for such evidently his companion was—towards him ; and the conversation which ensued altogether escaped the ear of Duvivier.

As the speakers retired from the open door, the young Frenchman, who had overheard what made him doubly anxious to gain admission to the palace, determined to take advantage of the opportunity offered ; and he glided in without being observed. Anxious to ascertain what he had but vaguely gathered

from the dialogue upon the terrace, he directed his cautious steps towards the chamber whence the sounds that had first struck him issued. One or two rooms of a suite, dimly lighted, separated it from the cabinet where he had entered. Passing them, and approaching the sick chamber, Duvivier could distinctly hear the ejaculations of the Prince—" *Figlia mia, dove sei*—My daughter! where art thou?" uttered feebly and mechanically, as if the force and sense which first dictated the demand were both failing. As the sound of the muttered words died away, and Duvivier's ear was pressed closer and more anxiously to catch their import, the sick man started; and rousing again to vigour, cried in the tone of command that had once been natural to that voice, " Vittoria! Vittoria Colonna! art thou no more, to be away from thy dying father? Surely no. Ah! I remember. Brother, brother, hear me, 'tis thou that puttest this bar upon thy Prince, and shuttest me up to die.

What ! alone ? I will be heard !”—A creak and rustle upon the couch within bespoke the brief struggle of the sick Prince to arouse and right himself. He sunk again, and faint mutterings of resentment were heard to escape from between his closed teeth. Duvivier could no longer restrain himself ; he flung open the door of the chamber, and entered it. Prince Colonna lay extended upon a couch of almost regal magnificence ; and as he lay alone, deserted, in prostrate helplessness, it was impossible not to contrast the gorgeous ornaments, the superb hangings, with the feeble piece of mortality to whom such were serving as the last honours. He perceived not the entrance of the young Frenchman, but still muttered and drew breath—muttered and drew breath, alternately.

“ —— My arm is withered !—my brain dried up ! 'Tis age hath done this, not degeneracy. I am betrayed—shut up to die ! Heaven ! thou, who hast denied the continu-

ance of my race, send its last son an avenger !”

The old Prince sate upright as he gave utterance to his fervid prayer ; and scarcely had it terminated when his eye lit upon the young and martial form of Duvivier before him ; the hand of the young soldier upon his sword, as if ready for the office, for which it seemed as if he had been conjured up.

“A miracle ! a miracle !” cried the old man ; “and I accept it. Good genius, I stay not to ask who thou art. My daughter—bring her to me, and I will give thee worlds of wealth.”

The young soldier waved his arm in contempt.

“Nay, then, what thou askest. My daughter here,—and witnesses of my forgiveness. Speed, for I am not strong.”

Duvivier disappeared at the Prince’s bidding, and with hasty though cautious steps gained the open gallery, then the staircase, and was hurrying in search of Domenico, to

the apartments of the domestics, when he fortunately met the old man, roaming in that unquiet and misgiving mood, in which the strangest and worst accident, whatever comes, be it expected.

“ Ah, Colonel mine, what make you here? You’ve perilled life to seek what you may not find.”

“ The Signora—where is she ?”

Domenico pointed up the staircase; and with a shrug and motion of his hand, as if he turned a key in a lock, he intimated that the young lady was a prisoner.

“ Is there a guard ?”

“ Only one of the Cardinal’s followers. The Neapolitans are all busy about the Castle; those who have not gone to fight in the Campagna.”

“ Lead the way up, Domenico. I seek the Signora Colonna, by the Prince her father’s command.”

“ You have seen him then ?”

“ This instant.”

“ Sleeps or wakes he ?” asked Domenico, significantly, alluding to his master’s reason.

“ Wide awake, my friend.”

“ Then, St. Dominick be praised, there is hope of escape from the Cardinal’s clutches, from under the dark shadow of his broad hat,” exclaimed the old man, tripping up the stone staircase with more than senile agility.

Having reached the top, Domenico conducted the young officer through corridor and apartment, till at length they found the guardian or gaoler of the Signora upon his knees before a Virgin and Bambino in wax, which the devout dependant on the Cardinal had removed there for his edification, and had further endowed with a burning lamp, to light his watch and his devotions. Before it, no doubt, he told

“ Nine hundred *Pater Nosters* every day,
And thrice nine hundred *Aves* he was wont to say.”

At present, however, he seemed to have

expected the coming of the Cardinal in his supplicant position, and was angered by the intrusion of Domenico and the stranger.—When to his demand of what they willed, he was answered that they sought admittance to the Signora Colonna, his anger and protestations grew loud, in hopes of aid. But the soldier's sabre admitted of no hesitation; and the doors soon flew open that were closed upon the captive Vittoria.

The Colonel sent forward Domenico to intimate his presence to the Signora; the old man could but sink on his knee, and kiss the hand of his young mistress. A moment was not to be lost, and Duvivier entered. She sunk, astonished, in his arms.

“The Prince demands your presence instantly, Vittoria.”

“And you his messenger?”

“Even so—the sole one that durst brave, methinks, the Cardinal's power, who has constituted himself the Prince's gaoler.”

“How came you here?—The French——?”

“With Championnet, are still at Terni.—I am here by stealth.—Nay, hurry,—the Prince is indisposed, is——”

“Is what?—speak! I am ready to sink.”

“He lives, and lives to reason, Vittoria.—But how long he may do so is most doubtful.”

“*Maria beatissima*—blessed Virgin! give me strength. Support me,—lead me. Perhaps he dies,—my father, my poor father!” And with the words recovering strength, she swept through the intervening corridors and apartments, and descended the staircase with a steadiness and rapidity that left Domenico, and almost Duvivier himself behind. Turning, nevertheless, for a moment, the Colonel stopped the old man, and bade him change his course, issue from the palace and seek the Prince B——, as many, or any members of the commission, whom it was possible to find, and summon them on business of emergence to the Colonna Palace. Domenico departed with al-

acuity ; and the Colonel rejoined Vittoria, as she ascended the steps of the great gallery towards the Prince's cabinet.

The Cardinal and the physician had in the meantime re-entered from the terrace, and both stood by the couch-side of the Prince, proffering the one his ghostly, the other his physical aid.

“ *Andatevi*—get ye away !” exclaimed the Prince ; “ it is a sound law of Venice, that the last confessor shall not be heir to the dead ; perhaps it is so of Rome, and I would not mar your right, eminent brother.”

“ How his intellects wander !” exclaimed the Cardinal.

“ If your highness will but take this composing draught ?” said the physician, holding a goblet.

“ No, sir, not one drop of a compound that seems the product of your long consultation with my holy and reverend brother.”

“ It is a gentle opiate,” said the Cardinal,

calmly ; “ think you that the days of the Borgias are returned ? ”

“ No, brother, the courage that swelled their villany is no more. I looked not for Aqua Tofana* in the cup ”—here the Cardinal and the physician both crossed themselves in horror—“ but a gentle opiate, even as thou hast said, which would suffice me now. Go, sir, you,—I have sent for another practitioner.”

Whilst the two stared at one another to find a solution to the meaning of the Prince, Vittoria herself rushed in ; and the old Prince, rising upon his couch, pressed his daughter to his breast.

“ My father ! am I with you once more ! ” said Vittoria. “ Do you forgive me ? ”

“ Forgive thou thine old father, girl, that banished thee from his side, and gave himself and thee up separately to the thralldom of designing traitors.”

* A celebrated poison of the period, so called from its inventor ; manufactured first at Naples, afterwards at Perugia.

“How is this, brother,” said the Cardinal, “was it not thine own act?”

“The act of mine own folly, which, thank Heaven, I yet live to undo. Where are my domestics?”

“Mine are at hand,” said the Cardinal, moving towards the door.

“Then, by my pryncedom, I will arm!” rejoined the Prince, again endeavouring to rise, but failing.

“See, daughter, your deeds. Your father dies; your intrusion has so agitated him. ’Tis fit you be removed.” And the Cardinal opened the chamber door as he spoke. In so doing he discovered an armed soldier in the door-way, who, with a drawn sabre, motioned to him that there was no egress.

“Treason! tenfold treason!” exclaimed his Eminence, regarding Duvivier. “Behold, Prince Colonna, your French guest, whom your daughter finds so aptly as her guard the moment of her escape.”

The languid Prince seemed to recognise the French Colonel, and bent upon his daughter a look of reproach.

“ ’Tis he who liberated me,” said Vittoria. “ Colonel Duvivier came by your express command to call me to your presence.”

“ *Oh ! le donne,*” exclaimed the Cardinal, muttering some stage proverb expressive of the mendacity of the sex ; to which the physician lifted up his eyes as a response

Duvivier stepped forward, assuming the same attitude and position in which he had first appeared to the eyes of the Prince.

“ Your bidding has been performed, Prince Colonna. Behold your daughter at your side, your stern guardians here overawed, and this sword a guarantee that they shall continue so, until the arrival of the ruling Commission, the members of which I have taken care to summon.”

“ By what right, or to what purpose this violence, sir ?” demanded the Cardinal.

“By that which I have seen and heard in this chamber, and upon yon terrace,” replied Duvivier; “moreover, by the Prince’s wish.”

The Cardinal was silent.

“Prince Colonna, I claim my reward.”

“Speak it, sir, and quickly, else shall I not live to pay it.”

“Not now, not now, Colonel Duvivier,” cried the alarmed Vittoria; “my father has need of repose.”

“And I must to my distant camp, if I would avoid the fate of a spy. I will speak now, and boldly. Grant me your daughter, Prince Colonna—your daughter, Vittoria,” repeated the soldier, as the Prince’s vigour and amazement seemed to be aroused together. “I love, and am not unworthy.”

Vittoria hid her face in her hands, the Cardinal assumed a smile, and the physician cast his eyes once more to heaven. As for the Prince, he looked upon the soldier in the same dubiety as when he lately beheld and thought

him his good genius, so overpowering to the old noble's reason and collectedness, was the extravagance of the demand.

"I am brave, and not meanly born," continued the pleader; "and should I survive the fate of war, shall not be undistinguished in a land which is the first of nations, a land where no titles overlook the valiant and the wise."

"What is all this? Who is it?" demanded the perplexed Prince.

"I am a son of France—a soldier," repeated Duvivier.

"A son of France!" muttered the old noble, who in his failing perceptions knew the expression to have been of old applied to the princes of the Bourbon blood.—"You do the Colonna honour—much, much, though it disturbs our principles and holdings, which have been, you must know, and are, imperial;—but a son of France!" and the wandering Prince went through the various arguments for and

against an alliance betwixt the houses of Bourbon and Colonna.—“ But let our daughter speak,—what sayeth she? We will abide implicitly by her decision.” And as the smile upon the cheek of the Cardinal grew broader, the Prince relapsed into a state of vague imperception.

“ He hears and comprehends me not. His senses fail. The Commission may arrive; they will not credit you, Vittoria, far less me; and this scene will procure fresh matter for crimination—fresh misfortune. Fate still urges us from bad to worse. Vittoria, if you regard me, come! Forêt waits without, and we will bear you to a place of safety and of honour—trust me.”

For all answer Vittoria pointed to her father, whose closed eyes and heavy respiration bespoke exhaustion and danger.

“ What is to be done?—Has all this been risked for nothing?” said the Colonel, as he looked round irresolute; whilst Vittoria’s gaze

wandered from him to her parent. “No, not altogether, since I behold thee, and press this hand once more. Prison—inevitable captivity awaits thee. This revered and supine form is unconscious of thy cares. Say, wilt thou consent to fly?”

“No, Eugene, I will abide the burning out of this precious lamp.”

“And then, what dreary fate awaits you?”

“Beyond that I cannot look at present. How, would you have me——?”

“Nay, but a prison—think.”

“If ye be conquerors, the suffering matters slightly that will end in rescue. If ye perish, or return no more——”

“Suppose it not. In ten days we shall be here.”

“Then you will, I hope, find us all——”

“But in what predicament. They told me yonder fearful things that caused me to come hither—of convent vows, of a lord to be forced upon the daughter of Colonna.”

“ Fear these least, Eugene,” said Vittoria, with a faint but re-assuring smile.

At this moment the Prince Aldobrandini B——, followed by one or two more members of the Commission, entered the chamber in haste. Duvivier pressed his lip to the hand of his mistress; and, profoundly saluting the new visitors, withdrew. They gazed in amazement at the apparition of a French soldier known to them all, within the walls of Rome. Guards were summoned, troops despatched. But Duvivier and Forêt, hastily quitting palace and garden, reached without impediment the distant spot, where they had crossed the city walls; and now re-crossing them, gained the ambuscade where their horses rested. It was too dark to trust themselves to the open Campagna; following however the road from the Salarian gate, they passed the bridge over the Anio, which luckily was not guarded; and thence, guiding their course by the known stars which glimmered over the Appenines round

Civita, they wended their solitary way across
the desert, like barks o'er the still and mid-
night ocean.

CHAPTER II.

“ Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us, shall bring a brand of Heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes.”

Lear.

As soon as the tumult, occasioned by the audacious appearance of the French Colonel before the governors of Rome, had subsided, these last began to inquire by whom and why they had been so hastily summoned. They asked of Vittoria; but she was too much absorbed in attention to her father's state to give any answer or explanation. The Cardinal, however, willingly undertook the task; and related to his brethren, that, with a trusty physician, he was keeping watch over the languid

slumbers of his beloved brother, when the Signora, uncalled for, and attended by the identical foe who had just insulted their presence, rushed in. She had been under duress, they were aware, and was not warned of the Prince's danger, lest her presence, as it proved, might excite her father to one of those dangerous paroxysms, the melancholy effect of which was this moment evident. She had been liberated, it was seen, by the intervention of the Frenchman; and his coming was no doubt occasioned by the secret correspondence of his unworthy niece with the enemy. The moment previous to the entry of the members, he had been about to bear her off, and would no doubt have done so, but for the difficulties of escape, which caused them to hesitate, and finally by their opportune arrival.

“ Who caused you to summon us in such haste, sir?” said the Prince Aldobrandini B——, addressing himself to Domenico, who had made his way to the bed-side of his master.

“It was the Colonel himself,” answered Domenico, “not his Eminence the Cardinal.”

“None asked of thee who it was not. It is very strange why *he* should have caused and hastened our coming. Here is a riddle, Signors.”

“It was that you might witness my father’s forgiveness of me,” said Vittoria; “and his indignation at our separate imprisonment, and at his being shut up alone, apart from friend or child, or even faithful domestic, in, I fear, his last illness.”

“I wish,” observed the Cardinal, “that my brethren of the Commission had been present, when the Prince Colonna beheld his daughter escorted to his presence by a French infidel—a plebeian paramour.”

“It is false,” cried Vittoria starting up, having at first but a confused idea of what she denied, her cheek and brow crimsoned, and her eye scintillating with a resentment to which words could serve neither as vent nor

relief. Did her hand wield thunder to annihilate the slanderer, she might have held her mood of sternness. As it was, she sunk upon a sudden from her attitude of pride and menace; and dissolving into a burst of tears, hid her face, with the sobs of her sorrow and resentment in the couch.

“*Bugeirdo e briecone*,” muttered Domenico, wonderfully forgetting his respect both to a Cardinal and a Colonna, as he attempted to offer aid to his mistress.

His brethren of the Commission looked upon the Cardinal with feelings, at the moment, not of approbation. “What can we do, but reason from what we see,” observed his Eminence, with a shrug.

Although the silence of Prince Aldobrandini B——, and his companions, spoke their sympathy with the sufferings of Vittoria, Domenico was yet the more enraged by their abstaining from interference, and by the unchivalrous, ungallant silence they preserved.

“ If I could defend her,” muttered the old man, stamping with his feet, “ and sweep these wretches all from the presence of the Colonna and his daughter. This cannot be borne. I will awake the old lion himself, though it be for the last time. Prince Colonna—Prince, awake ! and save thy daughter ! ”

It was too late to interfere with Domenico’s bold attempt. The Prince raised himself at the call, cast his eyes wildly round, and beheld Vittoria weeping at the foot of the couch. The old domestic held her ; the sounds of grief and resentment that burst from her, were the first of that distressing kind which he had ever heard to come from her.

“ My daughter ! is she—— speak to me, sirs, speak—is the reason of my child too shaken ? ” The agonized expression of the Prince’s countenance too plainly told with what feelings of pain the suspicion struck him.

“ If insult can have made her mad, she is so,” replied Domenico, bluntly.

“ And who hath dared so far ?” demanded the Prince.

“ Those around,—they who call themselves guardians of the State, and of your Highness.”

“ Nay, father,” said the lady, “ my uncle does but assert the right which you yourself intrusted to him, perhaps justly, of imprisoning your poor Vittoria. All I ask is, that you now unsay the cruel trust, and restore to me the right of tending your sick couch.”

“ My faith, a fair request,” observed the Prince Aldobrandini.

“ From one too,” added the Cardinal, “ who holds a traitorous correspondence with an enemy, and a ——”

“ Peace! rancorous churchman!” interrupted the Prince Colonna. “ I pray you, Signors, if ye have both power and charity, see that this poor girl be not removed from her father’s couch.”

“ And when heaven calls to itself the last Prince of the Colonnas, shall the proud in-

heritance of their wealth and blood be conveyed away to the infidel and the stranger?"

"Let fate too order that," replied the languid Prince; "it is time we were forgotten, since we can no longer defend our country even, far less the sacred privileges of our rank. The thrones of kings and pontiffs totter; and if the race survive, it is to ignominy. Another age begins—another day; and it is time that the old stars should set, if they would not wane and be eclipsed. Oh, Fate! how inscrutable thy ways; for half a century have I been wearying and upbraiding heaven for an heir to carry the old name yet farther down; and I now bless its providence that in me is extinguished the last spark of a flame that hath blazed through centuries of renown.—Rejoice with me, ancestors of mine; we are beyond the reach of the levelling arm of republicanism. No son of ours survives to be hailed as the *Citizen Colonna*."

"Brother," said the Cardinal, "you seem

awakened to excess of reason. Overlook not the child that kneels beside you."

"Overlook!—what, thee, my Vittoria, saith he?"

"It is worth providing, that she, the last of our blood, be not hailed ignobly."

"And she shall not be so—even though no coronet encircle the head, or princely canopy overshadow the seat of her lord."

"What if that lord be a plunderer—a foreign soldier?" continued the unrelenting prelate.

"He, that in thy despite, brother, brought my daughter to this sick bed-side! Were he the object of my daughter's choice, she has the consent of her Prince and parent."

The Cardinal cast up his hands in horror: the members of the Commission were scarcely less aghast. Vittoria, motionless, gazed upwards at the parent who was shedding upon her his most welcome benediction; and silent tears of gratitude were trickling down her cheek.

“Have I not spoken thy heart’s wish, my girl—even so;” and the Prince embraced his daughter, exclaiming, “now that we are shorn of the crowns and gauds, why should we wear the chains of rank.”

“But this soldier is an enemy,” cried, not alone, the Cardinal’s voice.

“To whom?”

“To us—to the Pontiff—to our ally, the King of Naples.”

“As for us, we have found him other than an enemy: as for Pius and King Ferdinand—if the one be not beyond the reach of enmities or friendships—the Colonnas have ever formed their own alliances, and this be the last act of the last of them; it is a re-assertion of our ancient rights.”

“But he is an infidel.”

“He is humane, and wears no turban. I will believe no man wrong in faith upon a churchman’s word.”

“A Frenchman.”

“The countryman of Gaston and of Bayard.”

“Ignoble of birth and rank.”

“They are primeval conquerors, these French of the present day, and will re-crest their own heraldry. The escutcheon won upon the field of conquest is not to be gainsaid. How, sir! another Charlemagne has come amongst us. Shall he not have his paladins? There has been victory, rout, and ruin, triumphs and holocausts of slain; of this are kings and princes formed,—and shall we not see them? Call not the candidates for such ignoble.”

“They disown birth and rank, and scorn their titles.”

“For a space. Young ambition is self-denying, satiated with the pure glory which such disinterestedness enhances. But as the spirit languishes, the name must come to mark what has been won and done,—as the funereal inscription is emblazoned to record the merits of the dead.”

“Rank they can have none, I re-assert. The very principles of their revolution, of their present forms forbid it.”

“Be it so,” still argued the Prince, who was making use of his last supply of mental vigour to overturn the prejudices that he had held as sacred during the course of a long life: “Nobility will be but the more noble, and the more aristocratic for being implied, not expressed.”

“And in such rank as this shall the Colonna name be lost?”

“Even as my daughter wills. *I* had rather it were so, than that the remnant of our name should go to fill the poor pride of some Roman house, whose inheritance of honour has been for a century past but ignominy. Nay, the prouder that inheritance, the greater that ignominy. I would not so overwhelm a countryman of mine, as to make him heir of the Colonnas, and weigh down the puny slave with robes and coronets.—But go, you excite

me to vain wranglings. I have spoken my decision."

"Your choice, then, rests upon one of these conquered, outcast fugitives?"

"What! Gaul conquered by Rome?" cried the Prince; and his countenance was animated with a glow of melancholy inspiration. "No, Italy! with a prophet's sense I feel, that conquest is no more for thee. Thou hast gathered in times past thy large, thy proper harvest of renown. And now it is forbidden thee to glean, even in the fields of modern fight, the scattered, trifling waifs of military honour. No—where Rome wars, victory is for her foe."

The lucid intervals of the mad, the doating, and the aged, are, in all countries, looked upon as somewhat oracular in their predictions. The present one of Prince Colonna struck with unpleasant conviction on those who heard it, and indisposed them to listen further. They were therefore preparing to be gone, the Cardinal with them.

his post, yet had permitted death and decay to visit. Around Civita Castellana, which they took care not to enter, although the tricolor was floating from its fort, they could perceive no signs of the Neapolitans. Mack, they concluded, must consequently be still intrenched at Calvi, without having since attempted any offensive movements upon Narni or Terni. Satisfied with this conviction, Duvivier, having spent a couple of hours in passing Civita, at a prudent distance from its walls and suburbs, deemed that continuing the precaution of journeying across fields, and hills, and forests, unaided by path or road, would be henceforward needless, and productive of much unnecessary delay, trouble, and fatigue. He had left, but a day since, the enemy at Calvi, the road from Civita to Narni clear, and he could not suppose that any hostile movement or occupation of the road, which contained, moreover, the important post of the bridge of Borghetto over the Tiber, could

have taken place in the interval, without at least producing a resistance and engagement that his own ears must have informed him of, even without the intervention of popular report. Deeming this reasoning conclusive, the Colonel and his servant, as soon as they had left Civita some miles behind them, descended to the open road, and spurred along it without fear, to rejoin their division under Macdonald.

They had been so recently, however, within the enemy's lines, that the frequent glances, prospective and retrospective, then so necessary, were still cast from time to time, by Forêt at least. There seemed little to speculate upon in a road so generally destitute of wayfarers; until at length the sergeant called Duvivier's attention to a few horsemen, who appeared at some distance behind them. They halted, which looked more suspicious; and Forêt's uneasiness began to betray itself in recommendation to diverge once more amongst the hills; when two or three of the horsemen

rode off in a lateral direction towards Magliano, seemingly at the bidding of their companion, who was straight observed to put his steed in motion, and continue alone a pretty swift pace along the high-road.

“Ah! we shall learn somewhat now,” said Duvivier; “it must be a comrade—the officer, I dare say, of a *reconnoissance*, or reconnoitring party, to learn the Austrian General’s intentions.”

“He has neither the stiff seat of a German, nor the slovenly one of a Neapolitan,” observed Forêt. “He must truly be one of General Macdonald’s staff.”

The cavalier’s approach interrupted this discussion touching his identity. His military undress, not differing much from that worn by Duvivier himself, did not solve their doubts; and his features, utterly unknown to either of our adventurers, gave rise to some suspicions. However this afforded no certainty, as many officers, French and Cisalpine, as well as Poles,

had lately joined the army, with whom of course they could not be acquainted. When the stranger, however, saluted and addressed the Frenchmen in the native accent of their native tongue, doubt and reserve vanished together from the minds of his countrymen.

“What news of the army?” asked Duvivier, eagerly.—“Any blows within this day or two?”

“Merely some trifling ones interchanged between Mack and Macdonald,” answered the stranger; “though I fancy that the fate of war must be decided in a day or two. The army of Championnet is coiled up like a serpent, into the most contracted space possible ; and it must spring.”

“We are precisely in time,” observed Duvivier to Forêt; “but have need, methinks, of hastening our speed.”

“As how?” said the stranger; “we are at Otricoli,—not ten minutes ride.”

“Indeed—ah! true—to cover the bridge of Borghetto, no doubt.”

The other nodded.

“Yes,” continued Duvivier, “that certainly was necessary, in case of Mack’s advance. And verily we may congratulate our steeds and stomachs upon the unexpected manœuvre.”

“*Parbleu, si,*” rejoined Forêt.

Rendered, even beyond his hopes, at ease, by hearing that no action had taken place during his absence, that he was beyond the reach of the enemy, and was within a few steps of his quarters, Duvivier had leisure to scan the countenance of the hitherto unknown comrade, from whom he had received such comfortable tidings. Although he could scarcely be ten years older than Duvivier himself, the hair of the stranger was of very predominant grey, which, joined with a cast of features at once melancholy and noble, spoke plainly that care and altered fate—not years—had worked this early change. There was a still dignity too—a suavity—a habitual elegance

of bearing and demeanour, manifest even in repose, that Duvivier neither had himself acquired in the rude school of warfare, nor ever remarked in those possessed of rank and years in the republican armies.

“This,” thought the Colonel to himself, “must be an officer of merit. I must have heard of him. Who can he be?”

It would have been rude to ask the question directly. And, moreover, Duvivier liked not to appear ignorant of the person of one of the heroes of the republic. For such the stranger must be.

“General,” said Duvivier, addressing to him some trifling remark.

The title was received by the stranger as due, and an answer was returned without comment. Duvivier ran over in his own mind the names of all the republican generals, those whom he had not seen or served under:—“Joubert, too young; Jourdan, I served under him; Desaix, he is in Egypt:” thus soliloquizing, till at length.

he thought of Moreau, whom, by some strange accident, he had never beheld. The features answered the description he had heard of that general: the modest suavity, and at the same time nobleness of manner, were all recorded of Moreau. And Moreau the Colonel determined in his own mind the stranger to be. There had been some whisper of his appointment to the command—the address of General struck upon his ear as that habitual to him—he had certainly been attended, and seemed to have despatched his aid-de-camps upon some necessary mission from the hill where they had at first beheld him.

Duvivier was lost in these conjectures; and the vigilance of Forêt was equally lulled by the agreeable and novel prospect of an approaching meal, when at a sudden turn the stranger spurred his steed. Simultaneously his companions followed his example; the consequence of which was, that in a few seconds, and in an equal number of curvets, the three

horsemen found themselves in the village of Otricoli, and in the midst of a swarm of Neapolitan soldiers and officers, who crowded around the Moreau of Duvivier's imagination, and demanded tidings of him in the wide-mouthed jargon of their country. Colonel Duvivier and his faithful servant were aghast; the drowsiness consequent upon two sleepless and fatiguing nights, which must have increased their want of vigilance and discernment in this case, almost led them to hope that the scene was all a dream. But the winged horse of Naples, and the keys of the Church floated in sight,—the red uniform of Ferdinand's troops was but too conspicuous around;—and when General Mack approached and saluted their companion as *Monsieur Le General De Damas*, the mistake and enigma were solved to their consternation.

Retreat was impossible; both Duvivier and Forêt scanned well the numbers round, and the issues and chances of escape; but when

their eyes met, they mutually and tacitly owned the impracticability and madness of such an attempt. M. De Damas was, however, evidently a Frenchman—an *emigré*, no doubt, from his title, and from his being in the service of his country's foes; and might, from some latent principle of patriotism, mean them fair. It indeed appeared so, for no notice whatever was taken of the two entrapped Frenchmen. They passed with the crowd as followers of De Damas; and he seemed to make no effort, or to have no intentions to undeceive them. When he had returned all the salutations, and answered all the querists, the *emigré* General moved on towards his quarters, without a word of explanation towards his astonished companions.

During this short progress towards the outskirts of Otricoli, and even at the door of the palace or villa where General De Damas drew up to alight, Duvivier still looked forth for the possibility of escape; but close as they

were to the extremity of the village, the road had been cut, intrenchments flung up across it, and a strong body of troops, with several pieces of artillery, guarded the approach of the village, and rendered egress as well as ingress formidable to Frenchmen. There was no alternative. They accordingly dismounted and followed the General to his apartments, where, fortunately, none of his suite had yet arrived.

“To what corps do you belong, Messieurs?” asked De Damas, at length breaking silence.

“To the Nineteenth Demi-brigade of the Republic, under the orders of Macdonald.”

“Indeed! Here seems to have been some mistake.”

“None on your part, I imagine, Monsieur De Damas,” rejoined Duvivier. “On ours it is likely to prove a most inconvenient one. We could not suppose a French tongue to belong to any other than a French heart and arm.”

The General coloured slightly.—“You

show me an ungenerous example, sir, in that taunt. The direction of your ride seemed fixed before I overtook you. And had I not done so, your present condition might be somewhat more hopeless."

"Could we have suspected you, General, our sabres would have soon terminated either our fate or fears. Nor should we have fallen upon Otricoli without a better look out. There were other ways to Narni than through this cursed village."

"None safer, sir, which was the reason that I did not warn you. From Magliano on the one hand, to the Tiber on the other, our troops swarm. You could not have escaped but as you have done."

"Have we so?"

"Though foes, we are still countrymen," said De Damas; "unless you scorn to allow an emigré that honour."

Duvivier was about to reply with courtesy and gratitude for the protection of his com-

patriot, when Forêt, placing his huge hand upon the Colonel's arm, with familiar and earnest rudeness, drew him back.—“ I scorn to owe my life,” loudly whispered the sergeant, “ to one of these run-away aristocrats, who draw their sword upon their country. Leave me to manage him ;” and he put his hand upon his sabre.

“ Tut, man, what could you do against an army of Neapolitans ?”

“ I care not for a thousand of them,” said the sergeant.

“ Peace! old mustache, if thou would'st not see the inside of a Neapolitan guard-house, be fed on macaroni, and be without blows or plunder for a whole campaign.”

The hussar reluctantly grumbled obedience to his commander.

The welcome materials of repast made their appearance at the moment, and contributed more, perhaps, than any other argument could, to appease the indignant patriotism of the

sergeant. Like Cerberus, his appetite and ferocity were appeased together; and seated at the same table with the emigré General and the Colonel, in all the freedom of military life, the gradations from the scowl, with which he commenced, to the almost as truculent smile with which he resigned his jaws to repose, were subjects of tacit and understood amusement to the Colonel and his host.

At length General De Damas warned the sergeant to look after the steeds, as he might need them. This post of Otricoli, he observed, had been won by General Mack yesterday, —gained by surprise and half an hour's hard fighting. Macdonald's position at Narni was much straitened by it, and another day could not pass without an attempt on his part to regain possession of it. A sharp combat, perhaps a general action might ensue. He was aware of the anxiety of his guest, that he might not be deprived of his share in the honour and the peril. And if Colonel Duvi-

vier would, with a soldier-like frankness, inform him, General De Damas, of the cause and object of his being within the Neapolitan outposts, the General would ensure him and his follower safe conduct to Narni.

It was a cheap and fair condition. Duvier, naturally frank, made no demur, but freely confessed, not only the object of his visit to Rome, but the circumstances which attended it, and the strange and uncertain success with which his interference had been accompanied. De Damas appeared amazed at the audacity of the attempt, pondered a little, and at length relapsing into a smile, exclaimed,

“*Ah! la France, la France*, thy sons are still the same. Another and a new species of chivalry succeeds, as soon as the old one is exploded. Is it long since you quitted France?”

“I may say, in ninety-three.”

“I fled the year before,” continued De Damas; “Heavens! it seems an age.”

“I fled too, and it seems but yesterday.

The difference is, you fled to the stranger,—I to our armies.”

“ A difference certainly, but not a cause. You, a youth, knew but the revolution, of which you were a child; but I, in family and in person, had borne the favours of my royal master—the smiles of his hapless queen; and what a dishonourable, ungrateful wretch were I, if their cause had not been mine !”

“ Patriotism,” said the republican soldier, “ is a duty I esteem above all fealty : my country first, and personal attachment after.”

“ Loyalty may bind both sentiments together.”

“ I fear more often set them at variance.”

“ We will not dispute,” said De Damas, smiling ; “ dissentients from either things or thoughts, long established, are ever uppermost in argument ; novelty so much in all debates makes up the better part of logic. You can at least appreciate my motives, as I can ever admire yours.”

“ That can I,” replied Duvivier ; “ but I

own, to see the sword of the brave man raised against his country, fills my breast with indignation against any argument or any cause that can consecrate such unnatural heroism."

"Indignation is misplaced upon the vanquished. Ours is a hopeless, melancholy duty,—a living martyrdom, to which honour ties us down—to war against our own countrymen—allied with strangers, whom we despise, and are despised by—whose pay we receive, and whose orders we obey."

"A word will alter that ignominious destiny. France now opens wide her arms to her repentant sons; and many noble spirits have already forsaken the mad cause of an individual race—of which, were each son a demigod, all were not worth the blood that has been spilt for them—for present glory beneath our banners, and the future prospect of a home in their own land."

"Emblazon not your glories. For, by St. Denis! the good old Saint of our good old monarchy, I never thought with patience,

much less with sympathy, upon your republican state, arms, or army, until I saw you lately flying before those lazy rooks of Naples, and pent up ingloriously amidst the Appenine. Since then the Frenchman has awakened in my breast. Even now I would not answer how far the ebb of feeling might carry me, but that I place scant reliance either upon our far-fetched leader or his redoubtable bands,—and, even in the moment of triumph and advance, anticipate defeat. So that upon the whole, I judge your cause has little need either of my sympathy or aid, except in restoring to it, as I am about to do, one doughty arm, and not ungenerous breast.”

“ Shall I then have no opportunity of showing myself grateful for your protection? Shall we not meet?” said Duvivier.

“ In the field perhaps.”

“ Better there than not at all,” replied the Colonel; “ and yet, can it be, that you have ever crossed sabre with a countryman?”

“ Often,” answered De Damas, firmly.

“ Whilst he was beneath the banners of France?”

“ In no other circumstances.”

“ I had scarcely thought upon that fearful possibility,” said the Colonel; “ and now do from my soul pity you.”

“ Were I not generous, I might also have some commiseration to bestow upon one so lavish of it to others. But—it is better that we part.”

Forêt at the moment made his appearance with the horses. General De Damas mounted, as well as the Colonel, and, accompanied by his two countrymen, rode past the Neapolitan outposts, until, at a secure distance, he bade them an abrupt and unceremonious adieu.

In less than an hour Duvivier and Forêt reached their quarters at Narni, without encountering impediment or ambuscade.

CHAPTER III.

“ Ecco vede un pratel d’ombre coperto,
Che si d’un altro fiume si ghirlanda,
Che lascia appena un breve spazio aperto,
Dove l’acqua si torce ad altra banda.
Un simil luogo con girevol’ onda
Sotto Otricoli il Tevere circonda.”

Ariosto, Canto XIV.

ALL was bustle and confusion at Narni. Aware that the force under Macdonald was not sufficient to cope with Mack, or dislodge him from Otricoli, Championnet poured fresh troops into the town, amongst others the Poles under Kniaskinski, and the Roman legion under the command of the Prince of Santa Croce. French, Poles, and Romans crowded and intermingled through every street; and as all the

stores of the army, the *munition de bouche*—mouth-ammunition, as they forcibly and technically express it—consisted always, at that time, in the surplus provisions of the allies, whom they honoured with their presence; loud and unceasing strife was heard in every quarter,—the hungry appetites of the soldiery opposed, and but unsuccessfully, by the economy of the poor inhabitants. Narni, Terni, and all that region of the Appenine, were, however, better affected towards the French than other parts of the Romagna; the pious hate of the subjects of the Church against the invaders being somewhat abated, by the consideration that a freer and more lucrative market had been opened for their olive produce, since the coming of these infidels. The picturesque declivities and ravines of that region are covered with this fruitful shrub; and the olive-gathering is there what the vintage is to the southern parts of France,—the important season, the *fête* of the year, to which all views

and plans, both of gain and pleasure, are directed and postponed. The crop too is uncertain, which renders it an object of still greater interest,—“no berry no mirth,” says the country proverb. If the season be unfavourable, it is a poor and struggling year,—their dependance even for bread resting upon the produce of their groves, so that whatever is metaphorical, in the expression of the poet,

“*Bacca nutrita Sabina,*”

is at least natural and true.

If exception was made in favour of the French, their Polish auxiliaries were irredeemably odious; and, moreover, neither understanding themselves, nor being understood, the scenes of strife that ensued were numerous. Kniasinski vowed—and with reason—that an action would be far less troublesome and dangerous; and, but for Duvivier’s aid, the Polish officer himself must have fared badly. The Roman legion, as is the case with heroes as well as

prophets in their own country, were least respected, and their wants scantily supplied.—The open piazza was covered with their swarthy troops, who took up any where their station for the night, too lazy and timorous, and too little accustomed to the mode of living in free quarters, to exert themselves for their own comfort.

Duvivier had hoped, after two nights watchfulness and fatigue, to enjoy undisturbed repose; but his regiment, with a column that awaited his command, was already in advance of Narni, and stationed in a little village somewhat out of the direct road, in order to conceal the hostile intentions of the morrow but not far removed from the Neapolitan outposts before Otricoli. Hither he was obliged to return, not however till he had had an interview with the commander-in-chief, then a Narni.

During the night every disposition was made for the attack. Kniaskinski—more grandilo-

quent than ever, since he had shewed his deeds not to fall short of his words—and the Prince of Santa Croce, were joined with Duvivier in the enterprise. They were well contrasted, for the Roman was austere and silent, breathing all the magnanimity and republicanism of his classic ancestors, nothing moved by the vaunts of the Pole, whom he looked on as a most incomprehensible barbarian. Kniaskinski, on his part, mistook the gravity of the Roman for pusillanimity, and presumed upon the supposition.

“It is most amazing,” cried the Pole; “here am I, on the eve of victory, left to quaff the purple wine alone. You, Prince, pass the flagon as if you were an anchoret of Spoleto. And our French comrade sinks to a slumber as if ’twere to his last. How shattered and weary he looks, his chin unshorn rivals the growth of his hussar lip. What can he have been about? Intrigue, intrigue, I warrant! Could you not help me to his mistress’s name,

Prince Santa Croce? You know all the *belle donne* of these parts?"

Had the Prince's cheek been sufficiently transparent to betray a blush, it had done so at what he considered the egregious indiscretion of the Pole. He deigned no answer to the soldier's question.

"Those boots of his have trodden the streets of Rome within these twenty-four hours," continued Kniaskinski.

"Impossible," replied the Roman.

"Are these your soldier-like ideas, that such a journey is impossible?"

"But the distance—the enemy——"

"Risk, risk is the very stuff of glory. He has been haunting the palace of old Colonna, as certainly as that Mack is in possession of Otricoli."

"There is no matron of that house to slander, Sir Pole,—mark me," said Santa Croce; "its daughter I know too well, and respect too much, to hear her named lightly."

“Say you so, my Prince of no acres and an empty palace—my equal in that at least,—then I tell thee, I know the lass too,—know her wan cheek that speaks of tender, pining thoughts, and her dark eye, that could not tell a soldier to despair.”

“I marvel, sir, if you have gathered other language from it,” said Santa Croce.

This truth was unwelcome, and Kniaskinski's choler rose. “Draw then, Sir Roman!” cried he, “and I will prove myself to have one claim at least to the smiles even of your highness's countrywomen. But first to convince thee——Colonel, Colonel Duvivier!”

“Eh! how, Kniaskinski,” said the Colonel, starting up, “can these dogs of Neapolitans have had the courage to beat up our quarters?”

“How have you left the Prince Colonna and his daughter yester-evening?”

“What of them? Vittoria safe and well; but the Prince, I fear, upon his death-bed.”

“Ha, ha, Sir Prince, was I right in my conjectures?”

And, as the eyes of the Colonel reluctantly opened, he beheld the Pole and Roman cross their swords in combat. He sprung up to separate them, demanding the cause of so sudden and abrupt a quarrel. The Pole merely pressed on; Santa Croce replied, that he drew in the cause of the Colonnas.

“None but my arm shall defend the Colonnas!” said Duvivier, assuming the place of the Prince, and pointing his sword against the Pole. “Hast thou maligned them?”

“So far as to say thou hadst but just returned thence.”

“Truth, not slander that, it must be confessed, Santa Croce. It tells, I trust, against the honour of neither house nor maiden.”

“Roman maidens are not wont to be so wooed.”

“It is an age, no doubt, since they have been wooed by soldiers. I hope, Prince, that

you, a soldier, do not consider such suitorship to derogate from female dignity?"

"Not so, when pleaded by your tongue, Colonel Duvivier; but, vaunted by this foreign auxiliar, I own it jarred upon my feelings of national honour and propriety."

The Pole here sought to renew the combat, but Duvivier again interfered. "Nay, comrades, I am in command here. Cease this idle brawl; there are other claims upon the valour of the soldiers of liberty. He that strikes a blow here, shall not have the privilege of bestowing one upon the enemy to-morrow."

Suspending rather than abjuring their quarrel, the Polish and the Roman officers obeyed the injunction of Duvivier. The former, after replenishing and draining another cup, flung himself, without further rejoinder, to slumber, and his example was speedily followed by both his comrades.

Ere daybreak all were upon the alert.—

'Twas yet night, when the troops formed and marched in silence to commence the attack at the earliest dawn. The morn was chill, and the Romans, with the other young soldiers, felt the hour most inauspicious to courage. As they crept down declivity and through ravine, the hills above and depths below perceived, though scarcely yet by the sense of sight, the hearts of many, who proved the after-heroes of the day, beat strong with a feeling that very much at least resembled fear. It soon appeared too that Mack was not to be taken by surprise,—the intrenchments were reported to be well manned. De Damas, intrusted with their guard, knew too well the duties of a soldier to afford the expected advantage. This being ascertained, the columns did not march to the attack ere the artillery had been brought up, and made to scour the narrow streets of Otricoli. During the brief half-hour of daybreak, the echoes of that retired region were filled with the reports of

cannon, and the cloud of war rolled and mingled with the mists of the valleys.

Of a sudden the uproar ceased, and from its cloud the bristling column advanced; the quick tread, and the clash of arms, not yet hostilely commingled, succeeded to the din.

“Hark! to the word,—see—their increasing speed
Hurtles the spear-tops, as on rank-grown mead,
Or harvest ripe,—the quick gust is obeyed.”

The enemy's artillery paused till the French were within its fullest range, and welcomed the visitors at once with fatal thunders, the fumes of which instantly enveloped village and combatants. The intrenchments were carried upon the first onset; but Mack supported his troops too effectually to allow of the success of a *coup de main*. The victorious stragglers, for they were no more, who had surmounted the intrenchments, were rolled back upon their comrades; and, after a short struggle, the assailants retired to recover order and breath. Pole succeeded Gaul, and Roman followed

Pole ; still the tide of war ebbed and flowed for the space of an hour, marking its furrows with slain.

“ What is yon officer,” cried Kniaskinski, “ that makes this petty trench good against an army, and puts the spirit of the north into these wretches of the south ? If he be Italian I am no Pole.”

“ On him depends the fortune of the day,” said Santa Croce ; “ if he be no Italian, an Italian arm may more honourably deal his death-blow.”

With the observation the Prince led on his legion to the attack. None swerved or shrunk, be it recorded, but in breasting the enemy, all duty seemed to have been discharged ; and Santa Croce had scarcely crossed his sabre with that of De Damas, ere his troops were in retreat. The emigrant Frenchman smiled, and pointed to the rout. The Pole succeeded ; and his troops again surmounting the intrenchment, Kniaskinski, by voice and gesture, sum-

moned De Damas to individual encounter. That general was too much engaged in the duties of his post to heed the challenge of an individual, till he felt himself personally assailed, and then but few motions of his arm sufficed to lay his antagonist prostrate. The courage and fortune of the opposing armies were not proportionate to those of their respective leaders; for as the French poured in to the aid of Kniaskinski, who had made good his ground, the Neapolitans gave way; and De Damas, pressed and abandoned, was borne, by the mingled throng of fugitives and pursuers, back upon the reserve of Mack. Duvivier marked the lion-like retreat of his countryman: he pitied and admired. He neither shrunk from nor sought his encounter, yet was contented that chance so ordered it that they had not met in the strife.

If the spirit of the emigré General had failed in exciting his troops to resist successfully the attack of his republican countrymen,

Mack, in all his strategic skill, and his utter ignorance of the troops whom he commanded—the General and his division, the one Austrian and the other Neapolitan, being utterly unintelligible to each other—may be supposed little fitted to retrieve what De Damas had lost. Duvivier gained undisputed possession of Otricoli, and subsequently of Borghetto, the bridge of which over the Tiber, was the principal object of the contest. The retreat of the Neapolitans was most disorderly, as the uneven nature of the ground indeed forced it to be; and as the fugitives traversed the hills and ravines of the surrounding Apennine towards Calvi, the French and Polish marksmen stopped for ever the flight of many. As the combat and strife, with its concentrated din, was subsiding into rout on one part, and victory on the other, the sounds of cannon were heard in other quarters of the Apennine. Championnet had not directed his sole efforts upon Otricoli. Though isolated in parts, the

engagement between the armies was almost general; and the victorious division had not been an hour in possession of its conquest, ere it was ordered to advance, and co-operate with the rest of the army already in action.

Kniaskinski, on being extricated from the heap of friends and foes that honourably covered him, was found to have fallen by no fatal blow. The wound inflicted upon his pride was the sorest he had to support;—the brief encounter and its termination, had been witnessed by the troops of both armies; and quickly as the Pole sought a device, it was some time ere he could frame an account of his mishap, so as to dispose the blame of it upon that scape-goat of all unskilfulness and imprudence—ill fortune.

That day passed, bringing no further adventure to Duvivier except a fatiguing march. The enemy had retreated to Cantalupa, abandoning at once their plans of offence. Mack, and his routed division, took post on the moun-

tain of Buono, where it surrendered the next morning, after an inconsiderable resistance, to a force under General Mathieu. Championnet now saw, that Mack, if beaten from the ground he at present occupied, would be compelled to abandon Rome,—as a retreat to it, after an unsuccessful action, would be impossible, across the open waste of the Campagna. He therefore took every possible measure to renew the general engagement—concentrated his lately scattered detachments; and, on the evening of the fourteenth, had concluded dispositions, which, he was certain, would on the morrow force the Neapolitan commander to decide the fate of Rome by a final engagement.

That morrow came. Ardent and sanguine as were the hopes and spirit of the French General, he could not but entertain considerable fears of the result, the Neapolitan force far out-numbering his. What then must have been his surprise, when, after all orders issued,

the break of day came to reveal the fact of General Mack's retreat? The Neapolitans had altogether disappeared. Abandoning an advantageous position, and flying from the face of an inferior force, they had withdrawn to Rome by a night march across the Campagna. Triumph and disappointment at once filled the breasts of the French—the Appenine rung with their shouts of exultation, as they descended from its heights, and issued from its vales, to follow the tracks of the fugitive army, whose mass they could descry in the distant waste, the wake of its hurried course marked by a long line of waifs and stragglers.

The cavalry set forward instantly in pursuit; and Duvivier, anxious and exulting, as much from private as from patriotic feelings, led eagerly the victors once more towards the Eternal City. The enemy had been rapid in retreat: it was late in the day, and not till they had reached the banks of the Anio or Teverone, that the French attained the rear-

guard of the Neapolitans. Their first charge drove some fifty lagging cavaliers into the stream. The Ponte Salaro, over which that part of Mack's army, first reached by the French cavalry, traversed, was too strongly guarded by its ruined castle and works to permit its being carried by a few horsemen ; and the stream of the Anio, though of inconsiderable breadth, had worn its way into the soft soil of the desert, and flowed so deep below the surface of the soil, that its passage in the presence of an enemy was perilous, if not impracticable. This preserved the rear-guard of Mack from total rout beneath the very walls of the city which they had come to succour.

As fresh troops came up, the Anio was no longer an obstacle ; and the French poured over it. The Neapolitans had in the meantime entered Rome by the Salarian and other gates ; but no attempt whatsoever, on their part, was made to close them against the enemy, or to defend the walls. They, in

short, but traversed an angle of the city, entering by the eastern, and straight re-issuing, without more delay than was necessary to collect the garrison, by the southern gates, viz. the Porte Latina, and that of San Giovanni. Never was victory more easily won, or more pusillanimously yielded. Championnet had promised to re-enter Rome in twenty days; and three before that period had expired, he thus re-entered, on the evening of the fifteenth of December.

In the midst of this flow of success, tidings of rather an alarming nature were reported. These were, that a very considerable body of Neapolitans, under the command of a French emigré, by name Damas, had been cut off from communication with Mack, and was advancing upon Rome from the north. Had Mack been aware of the situation and intention of his lieutenant, their co-operation might have been fatal to the small body of the French, whom their zeal had led so far in advance, and

removed from support. . The tidings reached Duvivier just as he was dismissing for the time all thoughts of war and action from his breast; and, as bending his course towards the Campidoglio and the modern city, his thoughts recurred to his old quarters—to the Colonna palace, the old Prince's probable fate, and—to Vittoria. He had kept his word in returning victorious. What must be her joy?

From these cogitations he was aroused by Santa Croce, to whom some Roman had conveyed the unwelcome report of the approach of De Damas, with a force far greater than the French could muster for many hours. Almost at the same instant, his attention was attracted by a Roman carriage, clumsily but richly ornamented, as are the costly equipages of that city, which was borne along by four sleek mules, the only team which papal etiquette allows to prelates. Urgent as the drivers seemed to accelerate the speed of the animals, they were resolute in not altering their prelatie

pace; and the equipage but slowly retreated towards the Neapolitan camp. Something urged Duvivier to overtake and stop this vehicle: but why? thought he, it bears some prelate, who will be punished sufficiently by exile for supporting his prejudices; and who, were I to detain him, might suffer a fate that I should regret to bring upon any one. Still the internal impulse was strong in urging its detention; and perhaps the Colonel would have obeyed it, had not Santa Croce's communication diverted his thoughts and interests abruptly into another channel.

He immediately mustered every horseman that had entered Rome; and galloping with them over the Campidoglio, he re-issued by the Flaminian gate and way to meet De Damas. That general had not approached so near as report asserted: he was little in advance of La Storta, but still with the predominant force and audacious resolve to force his way, if it were denied him. Refusing to join in Mack's surrender,

he had separated himself from that general, with all the troops he could induce to follow him. He had picked up large bodies of stragglers in his march, and formed plans of deciding the fate of any action that Mack would engage in; when the unaccountable flight of that general disarranged his plans, and abandoned him to the enemy.

When Duvivier approached the emigré General, it was fortunate that the dusk of coming night concealed the smallness of his force. To De Damas, who reasoned upon probabilities, it seemed necessary that Rome could not have been won from Mack by numbers not exceeding his own. This favoured the views of Duvivier, who, to gain time, advanced to parley with De Damas, and demanded what he sought.

“To obtain passage for my division, or open one with my sword,” replied the emigré.

“You shall find the one impossible, the other difficult, General De Damas,” said Duvivier,—

“ so difficult, that I demand you and your column to throw down your arms, and surrender.”

“ With seven thousand men, and ammunition, who would surrender ?”

“ General Mack would, I’ll be sworn.”

“ Perhaps so, but not De Damas.”

“ Well, we will fight then,” said Duvivier, firmly.

“ I demand four hours to assemble a council of war.”

“ One,” replied Duvivier, who dreaded lest even that one would not allow of the arrival of sufficient support. But audacity in parley was the known device of the republicans, by which indeed they almost gained as much from their enemies as they did by skill and valour.

With the hour darkness came, and under cover of the darkness reinforcement arrived from the city, till the French almost equalled the Neapolitans in numbers. Two hours had elapsed. De Damas was again summoned. And

as he deigned no reply, he was attacked by Duvivier, even though the hour was midnight. The defender of Otricoli, however, was still there; and the French, after a few attempts, postponed further operations till the morrow. They bivouacked another night upon the hills; a circumstance that, in Duvivier's pursuit of the Neapolitans to Rome, he could not have contemplated. In the stillness of the night, the young soldier cursed, though without exceeding seriousness, the obstinacy of his veteran foe and countryman, who at this critical moment detained him from Rome. His disappointment was still increased when the morrow came, and discovered that De Damas had retired still further from the city. Instead of a momentary sally to expel an enemy, his command now assumed the appearance of a regular expedition,—and such indeed it turned out to be: for the obstinate and valiant De Damas disputed every inch of ground that he yielded, as he retired towards the sea coast. It was not

till the second night after he had galloped hastily from Rome, that Duvivier got rid of his enemy, who, after being compelled to surrender all his force, embarked himself on board an English ship at Orbitello. Duvivier was generous in his stipulations towards the person of his emigré compatriot, whom, in the hands of the republicans, it would have been difficult to save from an ignominious death.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Du bonheur des Français que Rome se console,
Rome a vaincu par nous le pontife et l'idole :
Son génie est ressuscité ;
Et les fils de Brennus rendent le Capitole
A son antique liberté ! ”

LE BRUN.

SOME days thus intervened ere Duvivier was able to re-enter Rome, or separate his thoughts from military duty. Upon at length reaching the city, and disposing his troops in temporary quarters, the greater part of the army being already on their march to Naples, it was with an anxious heart that he disengaged himself, and bent his steps towards the Santi Apostoli. In despite of the confusion and disasters of the war, and the alternations of

victory and defeat, the population of Rome seemed altogether occupied with preparations for the festivities of the ensuing Christmas. There appeared no groups of politicians in the piazzas, no *quid nuncs* or questioners prowling for their prey ; the Trasteverini, seeing their reign was at an end, and not sorry to have got rid of their *Lazzaroni* brethren, whose rule they as little affected as that of the French, had either slunk into their cabins, or had banished rancour for the holidays. The priesthood were decorating their images, putting new wigs upon the Virgin, or rehearsing the novelties which they had arranged for *their* dramatic season. The important wax-modeller was finishing his *presepio*, or representation of the nativity, while the concoction of sweetmeats occupied every female. Those noisy celebrators of the season too, the *sambullari*, or *piferari*, as they are sometimes called, bag-pipers from the mountains of Calabria, in their plaids and sheep-skins, were squeaking their discordant

hymns in every street, outrivalling and very much resembling the Scotch professors of the same instrument in the streets of our own metropolis. The storm of war having blown past, such thoughts “had left their places vacant.” And the Romans, thus relieved of a weight unusual and unwelcome to their breasts, rushed to pleasure with a zeal and earnestness characteristic of the South.

Through this gay and universal prelude to festivity, Duvivier traversed the streets of Rome. He at length reached the piazza he sought; and already endeavoured to read in the blank and sombre exterior of the palace, what fortune had since befallen its inmates. These speculations were disturbed by his perceiving an immense concourse of people gathered around the neighbouring convent of the Santi Apostoli, issuing and re-issuing. On ringing at the portal of the palace, the Colonel was referred, by the signs of him who came upon the summons, to the neighbouring convent.

He accordingly entered it with the crowd.—The vestibule of the church was hung in black. The chaunt within was a requiem,—and all bespoke a magnificent funeral service. A bishop officiated, and seemingly as “one having authority,” for he sate, covered with his mitre, upon the very steps of the altar, displaying all the pomp of human pride even in the presence of death.* Aloft, in the middle of the aisle, was reared the bier, covered with a pall, though the features of the defunct were nominally disclosed, and a multitude of tapers burned around, sufficient to conquer the very daylight itself. The arms of Colonna, the princely coronet, and the constable’s staff, had surmounted the bier; but an order from the republican

* Gorani describes one of the most striking instances of the impious pride of the Roman priesthood:—

“Lors de la communion ce n’est pas le vicaire du Christ qui s’avance vers celui qu’il pretend modestement représenter, c’est le Christ lui-même qu’on force à cette démarche. Assis sur son trône le Pape attire à lui le sang de l’agneau par le moyen d’un chalumeau d’or.”

authorities had lately arrived, commanding these badges of feudality to be removed.

Duvivier had from the first conjectured, and soon ascertained that those were the remains of Prince Colonna. But, Vittoria—where was she? He returned to the palace, but could gain no admittance. He was assured, that no one whatsoever remained there: it was completely shut up. He again sought the church, put several indirect questions in the crowd, but was unable to gain any intelligence. At length he thought of inquiring for the Fra Tommaso, who immediately came from the cloisters on hearing of the young officer's inquiry. Had the Colonel been aware of the great interest and anxiety which the friar really felt for Vittoria's fate, he would have been still more disappointed at the apathy which he now feigned on that subject. That mask of meek and passive impenetrability, that men necessarily in the important confidence of others, whether as counsellor, physician, or confessor,

are compelled professionally to assume, covered the honest friar's countenance, and chilled all the hopes of Duvivier.

“*E sparita*, she has disappeared—the Signora is gone, no one knows whither,” was the first information that reached the ears of the astonished lover. The Fra knew no more, until the perception of Duvivier's anxiety brought the monk nearer to the feelings of humanity, and then he added, “Gone to Naples, it is to be supposed.”

“To Naples? impossible—and leave the remains of her parent here.”

“It may thence be inferred that hers was no voluntary flight. Her uncle, the Cardinal, became her guardian and protector upon the Prince's death.”

“And he too is gone?”

“There is no doubt of that,” said the friar, smiling.

“And has no one remained to see the last honours duly paid to the last of the Colonnas?”

“ This convent, grateful for the benefactions of that noble family, may be supposed to care sufficiently for that. There is an old domestic, however, long attached to the family, Domenico by name, whose sore distraction, when the alternative was offered to him of following the Signora, or waiting by the remains of his master, did make no insignificant call upon our sympathies. He should be here,” said the Fra Tommaso.

Domenico, however, was for the moment not visible. Nor was it material, as Duvivier at length acknowledged to himself. He knew the worst—the violence that had been used in wresting his mistress from his grasp. The circumstances in detail he might be anxious in listening to, but such could scarcely aid or direct his exertions towards her recovery. He returned in despondency to his quarters; rousing himself, however, from time to time with the inspiring reflection, that war led him still nearer to his mistress—that his arm might

with the same stroke take vengeance upon his own private foes, and upon those who were so to liberty and France ; and, perhaps, that in the conquest of Naples, he might finally crown his love with the laurels of victory.

In our most sentimental moments, it generally happens that chance sends us the companions least likely to harmonize in such a strain of fancy. Duvivier was sunk in most pensive humour and meditative posture : his limbs embracing a pan of half-live charcoal—that sad modern Roman substitute for the comfortable hearth and fire of kingdoms blest with a longer winter. His stare wandered from the said charcoal to his up-hung sabre, and thence to a signet which he wore, bearing the antique impress of a lion. It was Vittoria's gift to him ; the only trinket she could conveniently detach, at the time of his sudden and perilous escape from the palace. The lion had been the device of some one of the doughty brothers of her house, in that age when

crests were arbitrarily assumed, as denoting the temper, rather than derived from the race of the wearer. Though chance, not forethought, had selected a gem of such device for his acceptance, he prized, and deemed it not the less significant both of his own courage and his mistress's constancy. In such, and in many more as whimsical constructions was he contemplating the signet, when a summons at the door bespoke visitors;—they entered, and Duvivier was astonished to salute the chiefs of the magistracy of Rome once more republican.

The *fasces*, their gilding morally and otherwise a little tarnished, led the way; and the Consul Bassi, of course, followed, with a numerous suite, amongst whom the Grand *Ædile* did not escape the recognition of the Colonel.

“I am rejoiced to see you,” said he to Bassi, “more fortunate than your prototype, the first Brutus, safe returned from the perils of war.”

“ *Grazie*, General,” replied the Consul, parrying the ironic compliment; “ the Tarquin of the day has not awaited the lance of a Roman ; and I esteemed that the dignity of the republic was best consulted in its chief magistrate remaining at head-quarters.”

It soon appeared, that the object of their visit was to beg that General Duvivier—for they had heard of his promotion and reward, even before he himself had—would honour the *Girandola* that evening with his presence, and with that of some of his troops ; for the pursuit of the Neapolitans had deprived Rome even of the guard necessary to honour its civic *fêtes*.—The petulant lover might have refused to interrupt his musings, in order to witness a display of fireworks—even Roman fireworks ; but the novel title of General diverted his thoughts from love and pensiveness to fame and action,—and even the bustle of a show was welcome to him. It was during a similar scene too, that he had first met Vittoria ; and Du-

vivier accordingly accompanied the Consul and Ædile to view the illumination of St. Peter's, and the display of the *Girandola* in honour of the late glorious re-liberation of Rome.

The illumination of St. Peter's is really a very grand and striking sight. The enormous mass of its front, which the far from simple style of its architecture diminishes, if not destroys, in the broad daylight, is impressively conveyed to the eye by the myriads of lamps which its extent requires, and which, tiny as they are, are so numerous as to inundate the piazza beneath, and its mingling crowd of beholders, with a flood of light. The Cupola too, lit up in an instant, as it were by magic, in the dark height to which it rises, has a noble effect. And contemptible as the modern custom of expressing triumph by illumination in general appears, its union at Rome with one of the most superb monuments of the architectural art, dignifies it above a mere expenditure of oil and flame.

The *Girandola*, from a similar connexion with one of the still enduring fabrics of Rome's imperial age, is more to the eye, at least to any other than that of a Roman, than a mere display of fireworks. These, in themselves splendid, being the only way in which the once conquering queen of nations now expends her ammunition, are rendered sublime by their being strung round Hadrian's famous tomb, by their issuing from its summit, and, not least, by their ruddy glare being reflected in the Tiber, over which they explode. The Consul Bassi, the personage pre-eminent in all this show, seemed more proud of its success than of that of the Roman legion itself, in whose exploits he had not borne so conspicuous a part. For Duvivier, he bestowed upon it all the thoughts and attention that he could spare from Vittoria and his new rank. He gazed in admiration; and, as according to the *Moniteur*, a French Princess of the present day, having mounted the heights of Boulogne, and taken

a considerate view of the English coast, expressed herself quite satisfied with it—" *en etoit tres contente :*" so might our hero have said of the Roman fireworks, which he honoured with his regards.

As the last spark of the mimic volcano, that issued from behind the angel on the top of the Castle of St. Angelo, was expiring in the air, the Consul demanded of the General if he intended paying his respects at the Casa Santa Croce that evening.

"True, it is the evening," said Duvivier ; "but can it be that *conversaxiones* are so imperishable as to survive the shocks of contending armies, even upon their very site, and all the oscillations of disputed war?"

"Let me have a seat in your vehicle, General," said the young Prince of Santa Croce, dismounting from his horse close by the door of the carriage; "you are of course bound for my mother's. I offer you my congratulations, General."

“Come in,” replied Duvivier, “and answer the question I have just asked.”

“Survive,” said Santa Croce, when he heard it; “these political thunder-storms that burst over society, seem to me to purify its atmosphere marvellously, to freshen every topic of conversation, and shed an interest, unseen before, on every friend’s face we encounter after it.”

“I like your idea much. It is so. The society of France some fifteen years since, and that of Italy of course not so long back, breathed a very sluggish and mephitic air, that enervated far the better part of every mind that breathed it. The revolutionary thunder-storm has effected wonders indeed, in the way of purification, both morally and intellectually speaking.”

“Must not these go together at least, if they be not synonymous,” said the Prince.

“Defend me from your thunder-storms and purification,” interrupted Bassi; “murder and

starvation were the least of the accidents that stared me in the face for the last month. As I am a Roman, I would this hour give up the fasces for my old periwig, and the liberty of pleading before Senator Rezzonico."

"Would'st thou exchange them for the *berretta verde*, Consul,"* said Santa Croce; "for that, I take it, was the badge from wearing which the ambassador, and the General's countryman, rescued you?"

"Nay, Prince, I see you have been accustomed to hard blows of late. You must spare me, and pardon the querulousness of a civilian fresh from the discomforts of campaigning."

"Spare a Roman Consul. It is a favourite phrase of yours, Bassi," said Duvivier. And the Consul shrunk into himself at the memory of the scene with Massena and the assembled officers.

"Belisarius never said aught so pitiful,"

* *Berretta verde*, or green cap, a badge worn ere this time in Rome, by those confined for debt.

observed Santa Croce, as the carriage stopped at his mother's palace.

If the assemblage of the Casa Santa Croce was thin upon the night of Duvivier's first introduction, its numbers were now still more sensibly diminished. A tonsure or stocking of a ruddy tinge was not to be espied amongst its groups ; all the diplomatists, as well as the soft-toned, silver-haired elders of the Church's reign had disappeared ; and bearded, sworded sons of Mars had occupied their gentle places. The existing mode at Rome was martial—every Contino cherished his moustache,—no garb was tolerated except that of a soldier ; not only Consuls and Prætors, but Senators, Judges, and the learned members of the Institute themselves, had all donned uniforms to distinguish them from the rabble. The assembly resembled the levee of a monarch of the nineteenth century, whose pride is no longer to be considered the first gentleman, but the first general officer in his dominions.

There was no lack of females present. The Contessa Rezzonico was, as of old, seated near to the mistress of the mansion ; and even her frown was relaxed to greet in Duvivier the defender of Roman property. His reception by the Princess Santa Croce herself, was enthusiastically warm ; yet, in despite of his natural gallantry, the young soldier could not help, unconsciously casting a glance around in search of a more prized welcome.

“ Poor Vittoria !” said the Princess, “ she is no longer here to stand forth the Gallican with us—the anti-Gallican with you. You were a remiss conqueror, General, to take the citadel, yet allow the treasure to be borne away.”

Duvivier could not suppress a movement of impatience.

“ And the Prince Colonna died so opportunely for the Cardinal’s schemes—yet he was old.”

The Italians, even the polite Italians, like the vulgar and uninformed of more civilized nations, delight in supposing the agency of

poison, even where the decay of nature renders either the crime or the supposition of it most gratuitous.

“ Life was spent within him,” said Duvier. “ I saw the Prince little more than a week since.”

“ What ! you, General ? I thought you were fully busied in the Appenine.”

“ From time to time warmly so. However, I seized an opportunity to pay a stolen visit to the Casa Colonna ; and, by so doing, released the Signora Vittoria for a space from her confinement, not a little to the discomfiture of her wily uncle.”

“ It is perfect romance,” said the Contessa Rezzonico. “ A sorcerer, in the guise of a Roman Cardinal, carries away the betrothed of a valiant knight.”

“ And to what rival magician shall I have recourse to afford me a clue to the lurking-place of the fugitives ?”

“ In the height of some Calabrian convent,

no doubt, will he secure his prey beyond the reach of Pagan warrior ; for in this crusade, Colonel," continued the senator's lady, " you, I fear, are on the Moslem side."

" Nay, madam, I plead myself compatriot with Charlemagne, and am no enemy of the cross. I revere that most sacred symbol of knighthood, and vow by it, in the presence of this fair assembly, to deliver this captive princess, and set her free of every spell."

" Of spell mayhap," rejoined the dame ; " but a true Paladin must respect the convent barrier. Roland himself could achieve no more against its sacred screen than build a castle opposite thereto, and spy into the prison of his *belle dame*."

" But we must make some allowance for the lapse of ten centuries. Were Roland himself metamorphosed into a modern dragoon, he would make as light of storming a convent grill, as he did of old of intruding on the abode of a griffon. Besides, I trust, we shall

leave the red-capped magician little time for escape, far less for spell ; and, with the good wishes of the Roman fair, I shall set forth to-morrow with no despair of success."

" You have mine," quoth the Princess.

" And mine," said the Countess, " in despite of my patriotism."

CHAPTER V.

“ Jamque et proecipites superaverat Anxuris arces,
Et quà Pontinas via dividit uda paludes,
Quà sublime nemus, Scythicae quà regna Dianæ;
Quàque iter est Latiis ad summam fascibus Albam.”

LUCAN.

THE next morning Duvivier, leading what may be termed the rear-guard of the Republican army—a scanty garrison of Poles and Cisalpines being all the force left to occupy re-captured Rome—took, with hasty march, the road to Naples. Either in pursuit or retreat, the French are not troops accustomed to excite, by tardiness, the impatience of their General. Victory too, just won, and still a-

waiting them, urged on their steps at present. But no degree of speed or alacrity on their part could content the eagerness of Duvivier. He was goaded on by two passions, the only ones which had ever possessed, and which now divided, albeit in most amicable understanding, his breast. Thoughts and dreams, by fits and starts, chased each other through his brain ; and, although amidst the martial tramp, and din, and inspiring aspect of war, the mood of the soldier might predominate over that of the lover—still the peevish fretfulness of this latter character appeared to mingle strangely with the blunt, rude ardour and decision of the former. The calm equanimity of the commander was altogether wanting. An hundred thoughts urged him to put spurs to his steed—that of Vittoria's flying carriage—of the Villa Fabrizio, towards which he recalled, so fondly and circumstantially, his journey along this very road with the Prince Colonna and his daughter ; and where, per-

haps, some fortunate chance, or successful resistance might yet detain the Cardinal and his captive. His present command, however, was not a trust to be slighted or abandoned; isolated bodies of the enemy might still be wandering in the Campagna, a chance of which the late troublesome rencontre with De Damas offered an example; and, in the present crisis of affairs, when the invasion of a powerful, though terrified kingdom, was audaciously undertaken by a most inconsiderable army, a reverse, even the slightest, especially in the rear, would put the safety of all, as well as his own military honour, in jeopardy. These considerations held back General Duvivier, and compelled him to rein his equally impatient steed in the rear of the infantry of his division, whose moving mass seemed to him to wend their march most tardily across the Campagna. They trode the Via Appia, and at intervals the very pavement of that ancient way; but this thought nowise soothed the impatience

of Duvivier ; nor was the fatigue of the French grenadier a whit abated upon learning that the hob-nail of his military shoe struck fire from the flint which had responded, in a similar way, to the tread of the Roman legionary. Duvivier, at intervals, betrayed his impatience by galloping to the front, and anon to the rear, with a few excursions into the circumjacent desert, whenever ruin or aqueduct tempted the inspection of curiosity, that altogether discomfited his old and faithful attendant Forêt. The hussar, whose campaigning habits had taught him to keep his steed fresh for the more serious exertion of combat or charge, was perplexed at the General's vivacity ; and, after divers ejaculations, none of which it would be decorous to set down, he terminated with this reflection respecting his master—" *qu'il avoit la diable au corps !*" As to love, Forêt never comprehended how it could follow a soldier out of quarters.

The General did not allow his troops even a momentary respite from their march till they had reached Gensano ; from whence, under the pretext of reconnoitring the close and wooded country before them, he rode with a few followers to the Monte and the Villa Fabrizio. Although no actual or daring conflict had taken place upon these heights, or even in the neighbouring plains, still the tide of war, which had ebbed and flowed past, had left its furrows of devastation behind. Even the exterior of the chateau had suffered from the bootless hand of mischief ; and the side of the red square tower, formerly described, shaken and blackened by an ineffectual attempt to blow it up, bespoke the ignorant fears and barbarous precaution of the enemies who had just retreated. Duvivier was indignant. The interior presented a scene familiar to his eye, though in similar ones he had never before been so struck or pained. The rich hangings torn, the gilded furniture (in an Italian palace

scanty 'tis true) burnt and broken, the walls too besmeared with tokens of the soldier's fancy, little accordant with the sacred ideas otherwise associated with the place in the mind of Eugene. The little cabinet was more especially polluted ; the apartment which seemed the centre and choice shrine of domesticity, being selected by the licentious spoilers as fittest to suffer and witness their jocular insults.

Duvivier, who had hoped to find some token of his mistress at the Villa, which must have served as a resting-place to her and her uncle on the day succeeding their flight from Rome, was shocked and disappointed on beholding the waste and ruin. He turned his steps to the brow of Monte Fabrizio where he had first poured forth his heart to Vittoria. That scene was unchanged. Man's warfare might mar the work of man, but the face of nature smiled the same in his despite. The lake of Nemi lay unruffled far beneath, although the dark pines of the Appenine around shook in

the rough blast of winter. Whilst the young General was contemplating the scene, a shining object in the grass at his feet attracted his attention. He stooped to take it up, and discovered it to be a pretty reliquary of some value. A cross was engraven upon it, with the devout motto of *Seguite, Sperate*. Whether chance or design had dropped it in that place, the most likely one in which it would at once strike the eye of Duvivier, and escape that of all others, was more easy for him to guess than determine. It was a trifling incident, however, that amply consoled him for the sight of the Villa Fabrizio in ruin; and served as a theme for his fancy during many subsequent hours both of sleeping and waking.

On the following day their march was over the Pontine marshes, a region so formidable to the lungs and purses of wayfarers, both in ancient and in modern times. It is an original scene to view that amphibious plain, over which the ocean should in justice roll; the no-

ble amphitheatre of hills that encircles it, forms so natural a coast to repress and overlook the waves. Nature, however, has left her blunders, as well as art; and this pernicious desert were one but for its lone sublimity. Eastward of its extent rises abruptly from it the amphitheatre of hills we spoke of, their more lofty eminences crowned with the ruins of the old Volscian cities; westward, the ocean rolls a continuance rather than a limit of the imperious marsh. Destructive, however, as the region is to man, and, consequently, untrodden and uninhabited, it seems replete with animal and insect life, and in this it somewhat resembles the equally inhospitable regions of the Pole. Oxen, sleek and healthy, graze in numbers, at least eastward of the high road; herds of dull buffaloes plod to and fro, their tinkling bells resounding far and near; innumerable flights of wild ducks are seen in every direction; whilst the croaking of frogs, (a bore in classic record,) and the buzz of swarming

insects proclaim the air of the marshes most favourable to certain species of life, however fatal to others.

The interrupted works, undertaken by Pius for the purpose of draining the marshes, struck even his enemies with admiration ; and the melon-beds which the good Pontiff had so fondly and expensively laid out upon some of the reclaimed soil near Terracina, caused them to regret that the season of the year did not allow of a repast being gleaned from thence.

How beautiful is the exit from Terracina towards the frontiers of Naples!—the heights above crowned with temples, and classically resplendent,—the one huge rock fallen by the road-side,—the distant isles of Peuzga and Pandataria,—and the view towards the gorges through which the wild mountain road leads towards Fondi and Naples. But we must not allow the narrative to lag, whilst we tarry sketching by the wayside. Even Gaeta shall not detain us, with its beautiful bay, rendered

at the moment of our hero's passage either more or less interesting, as the reader will have it, by the sounds and smoke of warfare. The fortress still held for King Ferdinand, and was exchanging shot with a battery which the besieging French had erected upon the highest summit of the promontory. Mola, with its pale, green, orange groves, and Ciceronian villa, lay basking in peace and luxuriance opposite; no sign of foe or pursuer yet appeared, if those in and around the solitary fortress of Gaeta were excepted. The celerity with which the Neapolitans, their monarch, and general, had retreated, formed a subject both of surprise and triumph to General Duvivier and his soldiers.

It was not until it had entered upon the plain and marshes of Minturnæ, that this last detachment of the French, whose march we have accompanied, perceived the inconsiderable, but still chief army of their comrades, extending along the line of aqueduct that once con-

ducted the pure water of the mountains to Minturnæ. Some distance in advance of them ran the Garigliano or Liris, unseen from the reeds that concealed its course, and unheard from the full sluggishness of its stream. The spot preserved its ancient character,

“— rura, quae Liris quietâ
Mordet aquâ, taciturnus amnis.”

At some distance from the other bank were the outposts of the enemy, who had not paused from their rapid retreat until they had placed this river betwixt them and their pursuers. It did not seem to be Championnet's intent to pass the stream at this spot, the mountains and gorges through which it wound higher up, affording, no doubt, more facilities for that purpose. And all eyes were directed towards the hills, to observe the first symptoms of success in the attempt, which the inactivity of the troops about Minturnæ led them to expect as immediate or in progress. They were not mistaken.

General Mathieu, on the extreme left, had cleared the river, after a very slight contest ;— and the further retreat of the Neapolitans from the plain opposite Minturnæ, first acquainted Championnet with the success of his lieutenant. There was some time lost in crossing the Garigliano, the sedgy banks of which are most insecure, and the stream itself, though silent, runs, notwithstanding, deep and rapid. Duvivier, and a few horsemen whose ardour kept pace with his, plunged their horses into the river. Even of these a few were borne down, overwhelmed and overpowered, to a wide grave in the neighbouring ocean. Those more successful led the way audaciously in pursuit of the Neapolitans, who, after a slight and ineffectual stand made at Sezza and St. Agatha, made good their retreat behind the Vulturnus. General Mack, with the chief part of his troops, shut himself up in Capua, there resolved to await and stop the further progress of the French.

Of all the cities of fair Italy, the least attractive or luxurious in appearance is certainly the modern Capua. The rich plains of Campania are not reached till it is passed. The vineyards are rare and scanty in its vicinity ; and eastward rise some barren, bare, rocky mountains, most bleak and un-Italian in aspect. Such at least were the impressions which it caused Duvivier, owing, perhaps, to the bleak season of the year—it was in the first days of January that the French arrived before the capital of Campania—or perhaps the fortress, that stood strongly guarded by fortifications, and by the stream of the Volturno or Vulturnus, betwixt him and Naples, was not calculated to excite his admiration. Contempt for their enemies led Macdonald, who commanded the troops before Capua, to scorn making regular approaches, and to attempt to carry it by a *coup de main*. The attack, although it frightened Mack almost to surrender, proved unsuccessful, and was fatal to a number

of brave fellows, especially to the Polish troops, who, with our friend Kniaskinski at their head, were always foremost in the way of peril. A regular siege, at least the preparations for such, became necessary ; and, to the despair of Duvivier, who begged in vain to be permitted to lead another assault, Macdonald, as the term is, *sat down* before Capua.

The plan and consequent orders of the General-in-chief had been, that the several divisions, which had diverged from Rome to enter divers parts of the Neapolitan territory—some destined to subdue the Abruzzi, whilst others followed the high road and the Mediterranean's brink—should all rendezvous before Capua. But unforeseen difficulties had arisen in the passage of the Abruzzi mountains, and not one half of Championnet's scanty army could be mustered before the walls, within which Mack lay. No tidings even could be learned of their march or fate ;—every messenger was intercepted, tortured, killed, and cut in pieces,

by the barbarity of the insurgent peasantry. Little more was wanting to render the situation of the French perilous in the extreme. The mountains in their rear, from Itri to the Garigliano, were in possession of the armed shepherds and peasantry of the mountains. Priests and monks, amongst whose number Fra Diavolo was not wanting, headed the rude bands. The feeble detachments left behind by the French, were unable to preserve the communication with Rome open. Reports of a landing, effectuated from the English squadron, were spread, as usual, in all such moments of menacing fortune. And the rear of the army was kept in continual combat and *qui vive*, whilst the front pretended to carry on its operations coolly against the besieged city.

Several days had elapsed, the army being in this anxious state; the trenches before Capua were still but in progress, and gave little hope of reducing it speedily, when more serious reports and rumours were brought from the rear.

The sound of awful explosions too, louder than cannon of any calibre could have produced, caused the French to fear for their magazines and ammunition, which by that time could have scarcely passed the Garigliano. Duvivier, amongst others, was upon the alert, and had ridden forth to learn the extent of misfortune, for he argued no other.

The person whom he first encountered proved to be Domenico, the domestic of the Colonnas. The old man was journeying, guided, and seemingly guarded, by a peasant, who, on the approach of General Duvivier, bounded over the road side, and disappeared amongst the low oak woods that skirted the way.

“Blessed and thanked be St. Dominick!” cried the old man; “you were the very person, Colonel, whom I sought. Fly—save yourself! They’re coming!”

“Who?”

“Fra Diavolo, and all his army!”

“Army, forsooth. You have come from the Garigliano?”

“ Yes, in truth, and without a halt, I promise you.”

“ Say at once, what is doing there,” said Duvivier, turning his horse.

“ They have come down from the hills in a torrent—destroyed the bridges ——”

“ The bridges!—that is serious.”

“ And the powder has gone up in the air—carriages, men’s legs, arms, and all:—I saw them—I saw them, miles off;—the sight of it is here yet,” said the old man, putting his hands to his eyes.

Duvivier hastened his speed, forgetful, in this public calamity of the private interests that but just now were uppermost in his mind, called up by the appearance of Domenico.

“ And the prisoners—the poor wretches,” continued the old man.

“ What of them?—Have they taken many?”

“ A few—but a few,—and the *paesani* burned them alive.”

Duvivier had grasped his sword in nervous

impatience ; it now dropped from his hand in horror.—“ And priests led these men?” said he.

“ *Preti e frati*—priests and friars,” said Domenico, not then thinking nor expressing any censure upon the holy men, whose victims he nevertheless commiserated.

Without tarrying longer to question, the General put spurs to his horse, in order to bring the early tidings to Championnet. Domenico was in despair at being thus abandoned, and called loudly, though in vain, that his companion and acquaintance might tarry for him. Fearful as were the sights he had seen, and the tidings he brought, there were other thoughts even then paramount in the old man’s mind, in comparison with which the safety of armies, the rise and fall of the potentates of the earth, were to him as nothing. He had performed his last melancholy duty by the remains of his late Prince and master ; and having acquitted himself there, the grey-haired

domestic had set forth in quest of Vittoria, to devote to her his fidelity at least, since years had left him little more of the qualities of a servant. With unequal speed he followed the General, and by loud and confident use of his name, gained admission within the French lines, and was conducted to the quarters of that officer. Duvivier himself was there; he had not found Championnet; and some necessary orders to those in his immediate command, occasioned his return to the place where Domenico instantly found him.

The General's first feelings of grief and astonishment being evaporated, he had leisure to question and hear Domenico. The old man wanted a pass, that he might journey on to Naples and rejoin his mistress. Duvivier started at that which was denied to him being so simply feasible to another. The desired pass he gave at once.

“And I bring better news to the Cardinal than to the Signora,” said Domenico;

I am sorry, therefore, although they tell me I should rejoice at your misfortunes."

"Who tells thee?"

"The friar-folk, to be sure. Fifty long years do I remember their preaching; but never did I hear them place what they call patriotism amongst the cardinal virtues, until now. They must know best; but I tell them, I know no country beyond the house I was born in, and that was the Colonnas'."

"Well answered, and reasoned too," said Duvivier; "and for news, tell thy mistress I will pay my respects to her within a week."

"You do not believe, Colonel, what I have seen and related:—You are beaten, blown up, surrounded——"

"I credit it every word, Domenico; and on that very account warn you to make good speed towards Naples, lest we should arrive there before you. You do not know what French soldiers can do when angered."

“Domenico shrugged his shoulders, and was about to be gone.

“But say first,” continued the General, “did the Lady Vittoria leave Rome without a word for the friends she left behind?—Was there no message, no ——?”

“*Poveretta*,” replied Domenico; “torn by force from the remains of the Prince Colonna, —no time was that for either thought or word ——”

“True, true,” said Duvivier, hearing a rumour in the camp around. “A safe and swift journey to you. Deliver my commands.”

The rumour heard was occasioned by the confirmation of Domenico’s adverse tidings, and its spreading amongst the besieging and now besieged troops. The peasantry had come down in overwhelming force—destroyed the bridges over the Garigliano, and thus cut off the communications of the invading army with Rome, and even with Gaeta, which ere that time had surrendered. The most fatal blow to

the French, was the destruction of their park of reserve which was set fire to, and blown up by the insurgents. Terror and silence reigned through their little army, as soon as this was made known. Provisions for more than a day were not procured; and the whole store of ammunition was confined to what each soldier carried.

As General Duvivier left his quarters once more in search of Championnet, he read in the groups, in the anxious, intent, strained, but not appalled countenances of his comrades, a confirmation of all that had happened. No orders had yet been issued, but each soldier anticipated stirring ones; and the bustle of preparation began—for what end, fight or retreat, was uncertain. On arriving at the quarters of the commander, Duvivier found a council of war hastily assembled, composed of officers, all, whom early fate spared to fame, since celebrated—Macdonald, Mathieu, Rey, old Kellerman, and Championnet himself, a tall son of

the north in seeming; for he was fresh and fair-haired, blue-eyed, and in all contrasted with the swarthy troops he led, and the nations he conquered. And this contrast was of advantage to him in his conquests; so much more terrible is the hero whose traits are the reverse of those prevalent amongst the conquered. The dark-bearded bandit of the south scares the imagination of our maidens; whilst the ruddy or flaxen locks of the barbarous German constitute a legitimate object of horror to either the prince or peasant of the south.

“ You have heard of our misfortune, Messieurs,” said Championnet; “ the communications are cut off with Rome and Gaeta; we are reduced for provisions to the winter forage and plunder of a poor and confined country; * the battering train, which we expected from

* The same region, part of it, which Hannibal abandoned for its scantiness of provision :—

——— “ quia ea regio presentis erat copiae, non perpetuae, arbusta vineaeque, et consita omnia magis amoenis, quam necessariis fructibus.”—LIVY, Lib. 22.

Gaeta to batter this fortress before us, we can no longer expect,—since with our small force, and the small stock of ammunition left us, it will be impossible at once to keep this city, invested with an army within its walls, and at the same time, rout these insurgents, re-establish the broken bridges, and clear the road as far as the Roman frontier. Duhesme arrives not from the Abruzzi. The English, our inveterate foes, have perhaps landed in our rear. In this extreme, an extreme counsel befits us ; let us consider it ere we peril in it all the present hopes of the Republic in Italy.”

Such was the brief discourse of the soldier general. Between him and Macdonald there was a misunderstanding at the time ; and the latter, who had not approved of the rash advance of his superiors in command, now held silence, resolved to obey, but not offer a counsel, which, at a more seasonable time, had been slighted. Others proposed their opinions, which for the most part agreed in the necessity of

raising the siege of Capua, facing the insurgents, and of re-establishing the communication with Rome, or at least of cutting their way through the undisciplined hordes that hung in their rear. Different modes were recommended for effecting this ; from the necessity of the measure none dissented ; until at length Duvivier, the youngest general officer present, rose to speak. He had been scarcely able to contain his impatience during the proposals of his brethren in rank. The thought of abandoning at once and for ever, perhaps, the hope of reaching Naples and regaining Vittoria, was maddening. The ardour of the young soldier would alone, perhaps, have rendered him impatient and intolerant of retreat ; but when affection was linked with ambition in his breast, the hopes of both to prosper or be blighted together, the passions which agitated him almost deprived him of utterance. His cheek flushed, his throbbing forehead was clenched and covered in his hands, whilst he heard coldly discussed

the prudential plans of retreat which marred his hopes. When he did rise his appearance almost frightened the little council, such was his emotion, and so fiercely did his indignation and ardour burst from him.

“ *Est ce qu'ils sont des Francais que j'entends*—Are they Frenchmen whom I hear ?” exclaimed Duvivier, commencing his indignant expostulation. But a council of kings or generals, with the several speeches delivered thereat, forms a scene too often and too well pourtrayed, from Homer downwards, for my humble pen to attempt such here. Suffice it that the reader be informed that our hero was eloquent as he was indignant, and as convincing, at least to the fiery and congenial spirit of Championnet, as either the lover or the soldier could have wished. To fly—to turn one's back—and upon Neapolitans too !—the ignominy was not to be supported. On the other hand, hunger would by the morrow have abated the soldiers' ardour—the events on the Garigliano would

have reached and enheartened the garrison of Capua—the insurgents would hem them in closer.

“*Basta!*” cried Championnet, striking the rude table of the tent, whilst his fair and florid cheek became empurpled with a bold resolution; “Duvivier, your hand,” and the brethren in boldness grasped each other cordially. “To arms! citizen comrades, instantly,—one minute is not to be lost. Kellerman, to horse!”

“And whither, General?” asked the veteran.

“Across the Vulturno, and on Capua, doubtless,” cried Championnet.

Duvivier left the tent, repeating loudly the same words, and following them with a cheer, which the army around, in suspense and prepared to catch any excited feeling, echoed in the same spirit. The garrison of Capua sprung to the walls in expectation of an immediate assault, at the same time auguring some new misfortune to their party from the jubilation of the enemy.

The river Volturno, or Vulturnus, which ran between the French and Capua, still preserves the character which its classic epithets of *rupax* and of *celer* announce it to have had in ancient times. This river Duvivier proposed to cross, with the whole army, at some distance from Capua; and thus putting the course of its stream betwixt them and the insurgent peasantry, rush at once to the assault of Capua, without waiting for breach or trench. The elder generals, even Macdonald, declared this rash, and infallibly destructive. But Championnet, anxious to be the conqueror of Naples, as he had been the re-conqueror of Rome, and also won upon by the eloquence of Duvivier, in whom more than the soldier pleaded, ordered that young general himself to carry into effect his own plan, pass the Vulturnus, as best he could, at the head of the army, and lead it, in a truly forlorn hope, to the attack of the city.

In less than two hours the Volturno was

passed by a considerable portion of the army. Reports were momentarily brought of the still nearer and nearer approach of the insurgents, so that Championnet was obliged to march himself to the rencontre, more for the purpose of stopping their advance, and preventing the Neapolitans in Capua from learning his perilous state, than with any hopes of conquering or routing them. Duvivier, on the opposite bank, advanced to Capua. The walls of the small and insignificant city were manned with multitudes; and a large body, which the city could not contain, was encamped outside the walls, and now prepared to take the French in flank, at the moment of attack.

A spectator, who could have beheld in one view Championnet, with a small force, struggling against a countless multitude, amongst whose disordered ranks a charge of his disciplined troops easily entered, but to no effect, except to the slaughter of some hundreds of the rabble, and some more precious few of his

own ranks,—and, at the same time, Duvivier, with a well-concealed, well-marshalled, but scanty force, advancing to the attack of a strong, and almost over-garrisoned city, would have held at a feather's price all the hopes of the French in southern Italy. Such was the state of affairs, when some officers were seen to advance from Capua with a flag of truce. The beating and anxiety of many thousand hearts were hushed, and an equal degree of amazement excited.

They were officers from General Mack, demanding a suspension of arms, and offering, at the same time, to surrender Capua. The panic was inexplicable, almost ludicrous,—so much so, that a minute elapsed ere Duvivier could recover from his surprise, and at the same time gain presence of mind sufficient to assume the imposing and audacious tone that became the victors. Duvivier, in the height of his prudent assumption, refused to treat unless Naples were also to be surrendered, and

would allow but fifteen minutes for an answer to this proposition,—longer than which time he refused to halt the attacking column. The recovery is difficult from panic to fresh courage. Mack and the Neapolitans agreed at once to the terms of Duvivier. And without further blood spilt, the French tricolor flag floated, in that evening's sun, upon the walls of Capua.

CHAPTER X.

“ Chi e quel vile, che vinto s’invola
Via pell’onda, che l’ Etna circonda ;
Versa, O monte, dell’ arsa tua gola
Tuoni e fiamme, onde l’empio punir.
Sulle regie sue bende profane
Tremon l’ ire dell’ ombre Romane,
E di Bruto il pugnale già rudo
Gli e sull’ petto, già chiede ferir.
Re insolente, re stolto, re crudo,
Di tal ferro non meriti morir.”

MONTI.

THE death of Prince Colonna, which took place a day or two previous to the re-occupation of Rome by the French, flung Vittoria at once into the power of her uncle. The want of confidence in Neapolitan courage,—the rumoured or predicted successes of Championnet,

the sounds of immediate warfare, wafted from the neighbouring hills, suspended, as it were, the powers and authority of the ruling Commission appointed by Ferdinand, and kept its noble members too selfishly engaged in watching the fate of war, and its consequences to themselves, to allow them, at that time, to bestow a thought upon the daughter of Colonna, much less to interfere to restore her to her rights, and free her from the compulsory and suspicious tutelage of the Cardinal.

In the midst of the obsequies of the deceased Prince, came the sudden tidings of Mack's defeat and rout. The prelates, obnoxious to the republicans, instantly, of course, prepared for flight. Cardinal Colonna, amongst the rest, abandoning his brother's remains, and tearing from them the sorrowing Vittoria, sped with her from Rome as fast as his prelatie mules could journey—fleeter steeds were not to be procured at a period of such general demand for them. Duvivier, entering Rome

almost the foremost of his comrades, beheld in ignorance, but not without some instinctive misgiving of mind, the carriage in which his mistress was then borne away from him, perhaps for ever. The ruins of the Villa Fabrizio were, as before conjectured, the resting-place of the fugitives on that night ; from whence, with as little delay as might be, they gained the frontiers of the kingdom of Naples.

Ere reaching the metropolis, the equipage of the Cardinal overtook King Ferdinand and his suite, hurrying also south for security. The monarch was a tall, muscular, vulgar-seeming personage, as, indeed, are all the living relics of the Bourbon race, except, perhaps, the present Dauphiness of France ;—choice blood, like choice wine, may have too much age, and savour musty, in despite of the value set, and the wealth expended upon it. His features were huge, coarse, and oblong ; his hands, the delicacy of which Byron so in-

sists upon as indispensable to high birth, most mechanic-wise and ignoble. His accent and language were those of the merest Lazzaro ; and, clad in shooting-cap and jacket, tight spatterdashes, and all unregal—for, weary of his month's campaign, he had hastened to enjoy the last few hours' sport he ever hoped to have in his well-stocked kingdom—the monarch sate with two bedizened and begilded courtiers. He graciously invited Cardinal Colonna to enter the royal equipage, which proceeded on its journey whilst the prelate communed with the King, touching their late disasters, and their consequences ; not forgetting to mention, in conclusion, his own family mishaps, and the anxious charge which, by the decease of his brother, had devolved upon him.

“ You must wait till my wife comes,” said Ferdinand, in answer to a string of crafty demands from the Cardinal, referring him to his Queen, whom he alluded to by this uncere-
monious title, “ speak to her.”

And as he spoke, Queen Caroline herself, (the Neapolitans, who do not revere her memory, would say after a certain proverb,) drove up to meet her royal husband. She was accompanied by the celebrated Acton, a *ci-devant* apothecary's apprentice, then prime minister of the kingdom of Naples, and prime favourite of its Queen. He was a handsome, mean-looking man, two qualities more compatible than many of my readers will at first, perhaps, be willing to allow. Timourousness, aping dignity and pride, cunning, affecting to be wisdom, formed his character, joined with the natural awkwardness, that universal stamp and sign of Englishmen when not upon their native soil, which, neither high-breeding, royal society, nor even diplomatic habits, can, in many instances, remove.

The meeting between the monarch and his spouse, though sad, was affectionate. He was much attached to the not unlovely Caroline, and she to him, in truth, though not exclusively. Both were silent respecting late events,

wisely postponing so painful a topic. The Queen greeted Cardinal Colonna, and welcomed the reverend fugitive to such asylum as Naples could now afford. Vittoria she took under her immediate protection, into her own carriage ; and thus, our heroine, with the royal party, entered the streets of Naples ; the monarch welcomed as from a triumph by the shouts of his subjects, who, at least the lower and higher orders, loved his person and commiserated his present misfortunes.

Vittoria found herself lodged in the royal palace, under the protection, and in the suite of the Queen ; a situation which, accustomed as she had been to the independent and solitary grandeur of her father's princely abode, did not suit her pride, nor her temper of mind. It was, however, preferable to captivity under the guardianship of her hated uncle. He, indeed, was not too well satisfied with her majesty's arrangements ; he thought them in-

secure, and ventured to express his fears ; but the imperious Queen brooked neither cavil nor opposition. The Cardinal, lest he should altogether overturn his own views and interest, thought it best to appear satisfied, and contented himself by using his own and his emissaries' means of extra-vigilance around the court, to prevent the possibility of Vittoria's escape.

The object of all this anxiety and precaution, on the part of the Cardinal, needed not his vigilant watch and ward. Absorbed in filial sorrow, the young Signora's indignation against her uncle seemed solely caused by his having torn her from her father's remains. To his hidden motives, and ulterior plans, alive as she had hitherto been, she seemed for the present inattentive. The loss of her parent, although so natural and long expected, weighed upon her, to the exclusion of every selfish thought. When borne away from Rome, it was her father's memory she invok-

ed—on his name alone that she called for aid. The idea of her separation from Eugene Du-vivier, did not come to aggravate her sorrows, till, when walking the brow of Monte Fabrizio, the spot brought forcibly to her recollection the vows and hopes of her heroic lover. Then, indeed, she dwelt an instant on his worth, his hopes, the last interview which his boldness won ; and, finally, her revered parent's declaration, that he did not deem the foreign soldier unworthy of his daughter. She wept there and then, more and other tears than those of sorrow for the dead, bethought her how such sentiments might be conveyed to him whom they concerned, and, after a pause, the maiden kissed and dropped her reliquary on the mountain-brow, where it ere long reached its destined bosom.

This train of sentiment, however, Vittoria removed from her thoughts : it was unworthy of them,—worldliness was more so ; and

thus the journey to Naples was completed, and several days had passed amidst the splendid bustle and anxiety of the Neapolitan court, ere the daughter of Colonna shook off her filial sorrow and funeral thoughts, and began to consider in what manner she could best, and with most success, assert her rights and liberty.

The Queen—to throw herself at Caroline's feet, and appeal to her as a woman, to right an injured individual of her sex, was Vittoria's first thought. "But to what purpose?" after a time thought she. "Naples has no longer authority in Rome, or over Roman property. And as for liberty, what should I do with more than I at present possess? Return to Rome across the scene of warfare was impossible. And the victorious French, it is said, march rapidly upon this city." With this hope, most unpatriotic, I fear, did Vittoria rest contented to abide silently in her present state. She soon had cause to rejoice

at not having besought the pity of the Queen, on being witness to a scene in which Caroline displayed her inveterate hatred towards the French and their favourers. Her orders were blood—the instant and secret death of some republicans. Vittoria's countenance expressed her horror : the Queen perceived it. “ My sister, my beloved sister of France, perished by these men, and upon a scaffold ! Do I owe them pity ? ” Vittoria could not answer, that she did.

Meantime affairs approached their crisis. The advance of Championnet—the indecision and fear of Mack were announced. The German Generalissimo recommended an accommodation, and expressed his utter distrust of the troops under his command. The King and Queen began to entertain thoughts of flight, and to look towards the fleet commanded by Nelson in the bay, as their only place of refuge and means of escape. The republicans in Naples began to show themselves, to talk,

to assemble, and form plans for imitating the other cities of Italy, and the establishment of freedom under a popular government. The Lazzaroni, on the other hand, tenacious of their religion and national independence—jealous of foreign aid—and detesting both English and French, rose up and armed, and became agitated—why? they scarcely knew, or to what purpose. The king happened at the time to despatch a hopeless courier to the English fleet, upon some errand either of his fears or pleasures. The populace conjectured his mission to be preparatory to their sovereign's flight;—they seized him, slew him, and bore the mangled corpse before the windows of the royal palace.

Ferdinand wanted but a pretext to be gone. Pusillanimous as he was, he still feared to have it told in Europe, that, at the approach of the French, he had abandoned his kingdom without striking a blow, and had fled, leaving a still unbroken army behind. The dread of his own

populace in insurrection, seemed a somewhat legitimate excuse. At the sight of his mangled courier, he declared his person no longer safe; although, if the Lazzaroni were actuated by one known motive, it was attachment to the very person of their king. Their dread was that of being abandoned by him; their hope, that he would head them in defending his capital city against the invaders. Had he been a man, and seconded his people, there could not have been a doubt of his success. Alas! for the blood of the noble Bourbons! it needs a hero truly to do away with the sad examples of pusillanimity which it has presented successively in the three kingdoms subject to its sway.

The resolutions for departure were taken by the royal consorts. Preparations, and very extensive ones—such as the removal of all the precious works of art, pictures, statues, relics of antiquity, were made as secretly as possible; but could not escape the suspicion of

the populace. The doors of the palace were beset the day-long by the clamorous people ; the halls and staircases within, with claimants, courtiers, and with nobles anxious to learn the intentions of their sovereign ; or share, if required, his flight. To all were returned evasive answers. Truth would have been the simplest—the most easy—and most wise to answer. But that is the last and farthest speech from the mouth of the crafty and the coward. “ They were not going at all,” the Queen declared to one—nay, swore it, upon her regal word. And the questioner thus satisfied, was scarcely out of hearing, when another reply was given to another applicant, “ that if they went it was merely for a trip, and to return speedily.” To one the alarming and melancholy state of their fortunes was lamented and exaggerated, to another all was treated as a trifle—an accident. Vittoria could not but admire the ready invention, the plausibility of the Queen : the necessity of stooping to such subter-

fuges, of making use of such gratuitous falsehood, she could not perceive. A court was to her an enigma, of which she had not the secret, and could not unriddle. The Romans, notwithstanding all the Machiavelism which our prejudices attach to them, are a singularly simple and natural people—in this still preserving the spirit of their ancestors;† but which is owing more perhaps to the absence of any court, except a retired and sacerdotal one, than to any right of inheritance. Vittoria, strongly imbued with the high-mindedness of her native city, looked down in wonder and contempt on the conduct of even the highest born in Naples—this disgust, not a little heightened by the petty municipal prejudices which one state of Italy always cherishes against its neighbour. She sighed for Rome—for Rome even captive as it was, deprived of its Pontiff, and treated with a show of liberty.

† “*La Romana natura assuefatta a mirar al reale, non al vano,*” says the modern historian of Italy, *Botta*.

But she hoped better things to come from the cause and compatriots of Duvivier.

In the utter confusion which prevailed—each member of the Court solely anxious to secure somewhat for himself—his salary, his arrears, or his property—the King alternating between nervous anxiety and a state of stupefaction—the Queen busied in packing up her choice furniture, and the thousand pretty valuables of her several palaces,—Vittoria was delighted to perceive that she was totally overlooked. No one seemed provident of her fate, or even conscious of her presence. And, alarming as the loud symptoms of insurrection grew from without, she dreaded less the fury of the populace than the prospect of being torn away from her country, her independence, and her only hopes, in the train of the fugitive sovereigns. Buoying up herself with the expectation of being forgotten and overlooked, the Signora lingered in the most solitary and unfrequented chambers of the royal suite of apartments,

casting now a glance on the infuriate mob in the piazza without, and now looking forth with a shrinking sensation of dread towards the beautiful bay, where the, to her dreaded, English fleet lay majestically at anchor. She was startled at once from her hopes and self-possession by the appearance of Cardinal Colonna. He had gained admission to the palace with the greatest risk and difficulty ; and, interrupting the Queen in her earnest task of packing and preserving all that was portable, he besought her to see that so rich a prize as his niece Vittoria would prove, should not be allowed to fall into the hands of the impious and greedy Gaul.

“ Your representations are just, were our flight to be final,” replied the Queen, raising herself from a box of precious cameos, in the careful preservation of which she was displaying more taste than dignity ; “ but your Eminence surely could not suppose that we intend to abandon our kingdom and our faithful

subjects. We go but for aid, with which, ere a week elapse, we purpose to return."

"I greatly fear, your Majesty," replied the Cardinal, "that all aid is far removed."

"Sicily abounds in troops and warlike partisans."

"So doth Naples," replied his Eminence: "here is an army unbroken—a zealous, numerous, and loyal populace. If his Majesty would head them, or allow ——"

"Now go, Sir Priest. Durst thou recommend the King to hazard his precious life——"

"Far removed was such counsel from my thought," replied the Cardinal, resuming the courtliness which the stir of the times had shaken from him. "I humbly crave pardon for giving your Majesty cause to misunderstand me. But the daughter of Colonna, if she remain behind—if once the rapacious French get her into their power, they will endow one of their plebeian ranks with our principality."

“ Have they not endowed themselves therewith already, Cardinal, and through your wisdom too? Since, I understand, the French respect the properties of all who have not emigrated; and her, you have forced to abandon her palaces and lands, thus yielding them to the enemy.”

“ My niece has not forgotten to tell her story, I perceive. I saved her at least from degradation—from an infidel lord.”

“ What?” cried Queen Caroline, “ did the daughter of the High Constable of our kingdom—of one of our *grandeecs*—of Prince Colonna, debase herself so far as to receive the suit of one of these assassins?”

“ Even so,” replied his Eminence.

“ Then I will mar the hopes of one of them,” exclaimed she, leaving her task, and casting her eyes round in search of Vittoria. As the Queen moved to where she perceived her in a distant apartment, not willing to allow witnesses of her fury and reproaches, the

Cardinal made a sudden and precipitate retreat, unwilling to be confronted in the presence of the Queen with his niece, whose pride and contempt he always shrunk from.

Purple with anger, Queen Caroline approached Vittoria.

“They inform me, young woman,” said she abruptly, “that you have a lover in the ranks of these French assassins.”

Vittoria reddened too, slightly at first, on the mention of her affections; but soon as she perceived the passion of the Queen, her cheek assumed the deeper flush of pride.

“Answer, Signora, I command you,—is this true?”

“It is, your Majesty,” said Vittoria firmly.

“What! confess it too,” cried the Queen, beside herself with anger.

“I have been taught always to hazard truth,” said Vittoria, “nor knew that that would aggravate my crime.”

“*Une précheure*,” exclaimed her Majesty

contemptuously in French, ever the Court language at Naples of all except the King; “and pray, who may be the *citizen-soldier* honoured with the affections of the daughter of Colonna?”

Subdued as Vittoria was by late misfortunes, she experienced at this sneering demand a momentary struggle between tears and pride; but her natural spirit rallied, got the better of weaker feeling, and she replied,

“I should be indeed without that respect for my noble birth, which your majesty reproaches me with wanting, were I to make a confidante of one who sneers at me and menaces me, without any right that I know of, to do either.”

“Hey day,” said the Queen; “here is a Princess!”

“Your majesty does but bespeak my rank,” said Vittoria, calmly.

By this time the court had flocked to the altercation, not excepting the King himself,

who seemed delighted with the young lady's firmness, and even cried *brava*, until a fulminating look from his consort frightened him from the circle.

“Cardinal Colonna,” cried the Queen:—but the prelate was not forthcoming. “Acton, then,” said she,—and the Englishman obeyed her summons. “Let a company of the marine guard ascend; and see you that this outrageous damsel, who, were she not touched in the brain, would have shewn more courtesy towards a Queen in misfortune,”—and Caroline looked around the circle for sympathy,—“be conveyed straight on board the English fleet, to Nelson’s ship. You hear me?”

“It shall be done,” said Acton. And the Queen, followed by her little court, withdrew, not unwilling to escape from the expressions of honest pride which she had excited. Vittoria beheld their departure with contempt, nor failed to notice the mean appeal to the sympathy of her followers, now so likely to desert

her, which Caroline had just made at her expense.

The commands of the Queen were instantly obeyed. Vittoria was led away by the private communication which the Royal Palace has with the sea-side, placed in a barge, and rowed forth to sea with all the force of oars and hands. The insurgents on shore soon perceived the boat ; and suspecting that it contained the Queen, shouted forth that it should return. Many pointed their guns at it, with imprecations and threats of firing if the prow was not turned to shore ; Vittoria seconded their demands ; but those who manned the barge were faithful to their duty. The greater body of the Lazzaroni too were at that moment engaged in the attack of Castel dell' Ovo, or Castle of the Egg, which stretches forth into the bay. This they succeeded in gaining possession of, causing the royal guards and artillery men, who so weakly defended the fortress, to evacuate it without delay.

As the barge receded from shore, from the Italian shore, which Vittoria looked upon with a sad, mental adieu, as little likely to bear her footsteps soon, the concentrated hum of the agitated city sounded even more alarming than when she had heard the partial clamours of the royal piazza. But the populace formed not the object of her fears and anxiety. From a distance, heard even over the shouts and gabble of the city, came from time to time reports of cannon. The gallant French are there, thought Vittoria, Duvivier too, pressing amongst the foremost ranks, to fame and to her rescue : but now in vain—his valour could not win the prize. The waters already rolled between him and her,—those waves so fatal to the power of France, those realms where the talisman of victory was in other, in hostile hands. She was delivered over to their enemies, those haughty islanders, those rude rulers of the sea, who, in her imagination, were without chivalry, or pity, or sympathy for the misfortunes of woman.

In this train of thought Vittoria averted her eyes from the shore, and, with a start, beheld, towering above her, one of those mighty bulwarks of England's power and pride, which, huge as her imagination and a distant view had represented them to her, now so surpassed her conceptions as to strike her mind with awe, as the tiny barge approached its side. The unceremonious mode too of conveying her on board, (she was, as customary with females, slung up in a chair,) discomfited all the resolves of dignity with which she had been preparing herself to meet the renowned Nelson. The hero was on his quarter-deck, endeavouring to ascertain with his glass the cause or circumstances of the tumult that seemed to prevail in Naples. Since the murder of their unfortunate courier, the King and Queen had been unable to despatch a messenger with tidings, and English tars were the worst possible emissaries to collect them. The Admiral therefore perceived the approach of the barge

from shore with pleasure, and was anxious to hear what news it brought. From a similar anxiety the famous Lady Hamilton—who, with her husband, had gone on board to escape the hostility of the insurgents—as well as one or two gallant officers of his crew, were at Nelson's side.

Queen Caroline, however, in her indignation against Vittoria, had been too troubled to send any despatch, or account of the state of the city to the English admiral. The guard too, by whom Vittoria had been conveyed, and whose quarters lay within the precincts of the Royal Palace, were able to give no account of passing events, save that already known of a general insurrection. The captive was likely to be as scantily informed. Nelson was piqued at this neglect on the part of the Queen. The lovely lady near him did not forego her female privilege of being still more piqued, nor that of giving vent to it, which she did by slighting and contemptuous re-

marks upon the bootless errand of the bark and its crew. "What could have brought them? A female prisoner—hem," continued her ladyship, putting her glass up; "and handsome too;—what does she here?" in a tone receding from pique to anger; the idea of a handsome and captive damsel on board of the admiral's ship not seeming to strike her with pleasure.—"Some jealous, idle whim of Caroline's, I dare affirm," added she; thus familiarly alluding to the Queen of Naples.

"Who is she?" asked Nelson.

"*La Principessa Colonna, vestri Eccellenza,*" replied the guard, whose very unprecise orders, given in the hurry and confusion, had been merely to convey the Signora to the English flag-ship, without exactly specifying why, for what purpose, or term she was to be detained there. He of course took it for granted that the English officers knew all the circumstances of the case, although he did not,

and rested satisfied with having performed his duty.

Nelson, at the mention of the old name of Colonna, stepped forward instantly, with all the gallantry of his heroic character and his profession, to receive his noble and unexpected visiter. Her ladyship followed, though with less complacence. Vittoria, erect in all the assumption of dignity, prepared to confront the stare of a haughty gaoler, was overwhelmed by the kind courtesy of the English admiral. As he craved her commands, and demanded how he could serve the daughter of so illustrious a race, the tears that pride had checked before the angry presence of the Queen, now freely flowed; and she flung herself at the hero's feet, craving his pity and protection.

With that modesty and shame with which Britons shrink from of what is called a *scene*, and from seeing woman's tears shed before many witnesses, Nelson withdrew to his cabin, leading

his distressed captive, accompanied by Lady Hamilton and the Captain of his vessel, to whom the Admiral beckoned. There Vittoria confessed the circumstances under which she had been forcibly conveyed on board, her flight from Rome, the anger of the Queen,—finally too, with Roman simplicity and Italian frankness, she confessed the cause of all her persecution—her attachment to a French officer of rank. This avowal astonished Nelson much, his friend the commander more, for sailors are the most outrageously modest of all God's creatures, the veriest heroes of romance in expecting that all ladies should rival the heroines of the same land in delicacy and mystery of sentiment. Indeed all Englishmen partake of this character; and, as foreign ladies have been heard to remark, are, though so very anti-Jesuitical in religion, the veriest of Jesuits in love.

The eloquence of Vittoria, however—her dignity in the midst of sorrow—and sorrowful

and sad she was, as much from finding herself a suppliant, and in the presence of a stranger, as from other causes—her unblushing simplicity and earnestness,—and, not least, her rank and beauty, won upon the English hero, and warmed him to chivalrous sympathy in her fate. Even the fair Syren at his side, either did or affected to participate in similar sentiments.

“’Sdeath,” cried Nelson; “what means her Majesty of Naples?—Does she take me for a state gaoler!—a governor of the Bastille! my ship for a prison to immure women in, and separate lovers?—What a subject to visit her royal breast with trouble,—at this time too, when the very crown totters on her head!—Oh! too absurd—too absurd! What is to be done?”

“Let the Princess be re-conveyed back to her Majesty,” said Lady Hamilton, “with the reply that there are no dungeons on board the vessels of Britain.”

“ I fear much,” said Nelson, “ that these royal friends of ours will yet make worse of them than dungeons; and by some of their vengeful and capricious acts, shed a stain upon our ships and us, that all the blood of the brave shall not be able to wash away.”

“ But this young lady,—shall I give orders that she be re-conveyed?” asked Lady H., anxious to draw the Admiral from a moralizing mood.

“ You, fair Lieutenant,—no, our friend—— here is the better officer. Let us hear his advice.”

“ My opinion,” said the tar, “ is, that it would be d——d hard to re-deliver so fair a flower into the hands of that cruel virago. Is it not to one of those rascally Frenchmen she is betrothed? Why, Gaeta is in their hands. Let a sloop be despatched thither with her; and she’ll be at home and happy in a trice”

“ Wisely and generously spoken,” said the Admiral.

“Nay, that would insult the Queen,” observed her Ladyship.

“Oh! do not think of that sirs, I pray you,” interrupted Vittoria. “I am bold here to confess my feelings before you, since truth becomes sorrow, and makes friends of the brave. But to go, as by mine own will, to the stranger’s camp,—I durst not—could not. Put me on shore at Naples, there, on my country’s open strand; and I will ever respect your name, my Lord.”

“But, girl, the town is in insurrection. The Lazzaroni are up and armed, seeking for plunder. Hear you not their shouts. They have taken possession of your castle.”

“I fear them not,” replied Vittoria. “They are wild, because deserted and betrayed. They will not harm a woman.”

Nelson shook his head.

“They will not harm *me*,” said Vittoria, standing erect, as if she felt in her pride a charm to awe the savage furies of a populace.

“ Since you appear so confident, Lady, be it as you wish. A boat shall conduct you on shore, and obey you in its course.—Farewell ; I wish you happiness,” said Nelson.

Vittoria knelt down, and warmly kissed the hero's hand. In a few moments she was rowed from the ship's side.

She gave orders to the sailors to steer to the other side of the *Castel dell' Ovo*, that thus the insurgents might entertain no suspicion of the bark's crew having any intention to communicate with the Royal Palace. Her purpose was, immediately upon landing, to seek the palace of a noble family, with which she was allied, situate in the Chiaga, a quarter removed from the crowded parts of the city, and the present tumult. Thence, did she find it advisable, she could remove to any of the numerous convents upon the heights.

It was already the evening of the short winter's day when Vittoria left the Victory. The morning had been clear and cold, but the

north wind had suddenly changed to the Sirocco, or south west. With this hot, damp wind of Africa, came the wonted accompaniments of cloud and rain : the horizon grew dull, the sky sombre, and a similar shade was cast over the beautiful declivities of Naples. As Vittoria gazed through the coming storm at Naples—its Mole—its crowded edifices—and the animation of its populace, visible to her even at that distance, her attention was attracted first by an increase of clamour, and straight by the appearance of a crowd of barks putting forth from the shore. The shouts—the voices rose still higher, in entreaty, as well as in anger. It was the embarkation of the royal family and their valuables. The subjects of King Ferdinand stretched forth their supplicatory hands to him from the shore—besought him not to desert them ; and, as the barks, bearing their deaf monarch, still held their course, the mob still sent their voices after, with mingled blessings and imprecations upon

a head that they now at once loved and despised. The barks held on. The crowded populace stood upon the shelving shore, every face turned seaward, and visible all to the royal fugitives, as well as to Vittoria. It was a scene beyond even the painter's power—the agitation, the varied passions of an Italian mob, given vent to in all their exaggerated and fierce variety of expression. At length the clamours grew less violent; they subsided; and to the riot of ungovernable rage, succeeded a fearful calm. Each *Lazzaro* stretched forth his arms in mistrust—shook them slightly, then letting them fall, closed his hands, palms downwards—the usual gesticulative expression of doubt and despair.

Thanking Heaven for having, at least, escaped the horrors of exile, Vittoria approached the shore. She had now nothing to fear from the vengeance of Queen Caroline; and it was probable that her uncle would be sufficiently busied in consulting for his own security, to prevent him from discovering her, or working her further harm.

The English boat struck and ran high up the pebbly beach. The Signora disembarked alone; and the tars, according to precise orders, pushed off instantly from the then inhospitable shore. She hurried on, and hoped to gain the Chiaga unperceived, in the general stupefaction occasioned by the flight of the King. The English bark, however, had not been overlooked by the insurgents on the ramparts of the Castel dell' Ovo; and as Vittoria was making her hasty way over the high bank between the beach and the streets, then overspread with idle fishing-nets and boats, the new garrison of the Castle made a kind of sortie to intercept this female emissary, as they supposed her, of the traitor Nelson. Speed could not avail the daughter of Colonna—force still less: she therefore stood, and proudly awaited the coming of the rabble.

“*Dove vai, chi sei tu*—where are you going?—Who are you?” cried Michele, the *Capo-Lazzaro*, as his followers surrounded her. I need not describe the well-known dress of

this singular race of people, nor the ferocious characteristics of their leader, who, of course, was dark and savage. The only distinguishing trait about him, was a mouth of enormous width, and a still more enormous capacity of voice, to which, with a strong arm and ready hand, Michele, no doubt, principally owed his supremacy of rank over his brethren.

Vittoria, not without hopes that her reply would conciliate them, answered, "that she was a prisoner escaped from the English fleet."

"By whom imprisoned?" queried the Lazaro.

"By the Queen Caroline," said the veracious Vittoria.

"*Republicana!—Republicana!*—She is a republican!" shouted the rabble.—"A plotter against our King—that was our King: San Gennaro curse both him and his enemies!"

"I know nought of your parties. The Queen would drag me with her from my na-

tive land, and I have returned to it in her despite.

“ *Brava !*,” cried some, “ a brave lass, not to follow that Austrian hen, that henpecks honest Fernando ; and has taken him off with her, like a lubberly Genoese merchant-ship towed out by an Algerine galliot.”

There was a difference of opinion amongst the rabble.

“ Your name ?” demanded Michele.

“ Colonna.”

“ *Come*—the daughter of the Constable ?”

“ The daughter of Prince Colonna !”

The gang drew back. “ *Si staglia siano*, you’re mistaken surely,” said the incredulous Lazzaro ; “ the Constable’s daughter on this strand alone ! And this is no place for examination. Come—you are our prisoner—to the Castle yonder.”

“ I will not stir from this spot—from this open place,” said Vittoria, firmly.

“ Nay,” said Michelle, who read her fears,

“ you may be what you say—and in that case peril and ill fate would attend him who harmed you. I swear upon the blood of San Genaro, and on this,” kissing a leaden image which hung round his bare and embrowned neck, “ that no palace in this city is an abode half so secure to you, as shall be yon Castle.”

The Capo-Lazzaro spoke this with an air of earnestness that gave Vittoria confidence ; and his allusion to the insecurity of palaces, was corroborated by the jests of the mob, who seemed to understand his meaning, and to rejoice in the prospect held out of general plunder.

“ This, however, will make all sure,” said Vittoria, grasping the stiletto from the girdle of the Lazzaro, “ I shall be alone in the apartments of yon Castle?”

“ As its Queen,” replied Michele, bending himself to her for the first time. “ I now do almost believe you to be the daughter of Colonna.

CHAPTER VII.

“Età strana, e feroce, che produsse, i buoni per perdergli, i tristi per fargli trionfare. Queste cose abbiamo vedute in tutte le parti della desolata Italia, ma nella gigantesca Napoli più che in tutte.”

BOTTA, *Storia d'Italia*. L. 16.

THE enterprise and audacity of General Duvivier, in crossing the Volturnus to the attack of Capua, had, in our last chapter but one, frightened the Austro-Neapolitan commander into the demand of an immediate suspension of hostilities. This boon, which alone saved the French from destruction, was, nevertheless, haughtily conceded by them, accompanied with pretensions, such as the condition of the surrender of Naples as well as

Capua, which were mere impertinence. The King, at his departure, had commissioned Prince Pignatelli to act as viceroy ; and the Prince, as soon as he learned the negociation of Mack, interfered, and refused to treat so soon respecting the surrender of Naples, but offered to accede to all other demands, and allow the French peaceably to take up their cantonments in Campania, with an appointed line of demarkation between the two armies. On these conditions the armistice was concluded, with the idea also, that it would lead to a final treaty.

The Neapolitans withdrew : Pignatelli, Mack, and his principal officers, to Naples ; whilst Championnet established his headquarters at the famed summer-palace of Caserta.

Thus much the French General deemed sufficient for arms to have effected ; other means were in reserve for completing his conquest. It was the policy of the Directory to

seem not so much to conquer surrounding nations, as to liberate them from the grievous thralldom of their tyrants. The same machinery which, under the management of Bassi had revolutionized Rome, was now prepared to be put in action against the royal authority in Naples. A personage of the name of Lambert was the Bassi of that latitude; whilst a more worthy and powerful partisan of republicanism and French fraternization in Naples, was Count Hector Caraffa, a youth, as Botta describes him, “of ardent spirit—of vast and measureless thoughts.” The meetings, plans, and proceedings, of this democratic party, however, tended merely to exasperate the already-armed and anti-Gallic Lazzaroni; and a circumstance, one of those slight sparks which are sufficient to cause a revolution to explode, if the train of men’s excited passions be thereto laid, soon occurred to anticipate the intention of the republicans, and deliver the metropolis, without

their immediate aid, into the hands of the French.

One of the stipulations of the armistice between the belligerent parties had been, that the viceroy should pay immediately to the French the sum of ten millions of livres. In order to hasten the payment of at least part of this sum, a French commissary, by name Arcambal, was despatched to Naples. His appearance there, the purport of which was soon known or conjectured, inflamed the populace anew. They gathered in tumult around the Frenchman, and the carriages he had prepared for the transport of the treasure; and it was with the utmost difficulty, and not without the sacrifice of some lives on both sides, that the Neapolitan patriots (as the favourers of republicanism were called) succeeded in saving the French emissary from the fate of Basseville. Exasperated by his rescue, and by the measures which the Viceroy began to take in order to repress their

violence, the Lazzaroni now rose from their hitherto inactive and sullen insurrection; and, shouting "Death to Pignatelli—death to Mack—death to the traitors who have sold us to the French!" they rushed to the residence of the obnoxious individuals, in order to execute their menaces. The objects of their hatred fled promptly—the Viceroy to Sicily, and Mack to Championnet's headquarters, at Caserta. The remains of the army, which had been brought against the Neapolitan rabble by Mack and Pignatelli, disbanded,—a considerable part joining the populace whom they were ordered to repress, the rest flying with their General to the French camp.

Thus, abandoned to themselves, the Lazzaroni, their ranks swelled by the soldiery, monks, peasantry—by all that was loyal or religious in Naples, commenced a massacre of all the patriots whom they could lay hands upon in Naples. Breaking open the armoury.

and the museum, they armed themselves, each as best he might: those who could not supply themselves with fire-arms, grasping, in lieu thereof, the sword or the spear of some doughty ancient, which had slumbered for ages beneath the ashes of Vesuvius, in the ruins of Pompeii or Herculaneum, and now was brought forth once more to taste of blood. Thus armed, and inspirited by their first unresisted ascendancy, by their clamours, and by blood, the Lazzaroni and their partisans issued wildly from the city to the attack of the French.

In the meantime, the invading army, peaceably occupying the line assigned them by the armistice, were awaiting the stir and ascendancy of their republican friends in Naples. A rupture of the armistice, on the part of the Neapolitans, which would afford them a pretext for marching upon the metropolis, was beyond their hopes. All were impatient to behold the lovely Naples, to enjoy its lux-

uries, and to repose in a capital after the fatigues of the campaign, in lieu of being encamped during the wet and dreary season in the monotonous Campania, deprived both of the excitement of war and the comforts of peace. Our friend Duvivier, had other causes to swell his impatience ; and he would certainly have made his way to Naples immediately after the armistice, either in disguise, or in the suite of the commissary, Arcambal ; but that the misunderstanding between Generals Championnet and Macdonald, had grown into an open breach, and had terminated in the resignation of the latter. This, which devolved new command and responsibility upon him, necessitated Duvivier to defer his plans, though even fresh occupation could not beguile his impatience.

His regards were always turned towards Naples ; and his steps, in every moment of leisure, led him beyond the outposts. The disappearance of the Neapolitan army from

their peaceable stations opposite their enemies, first aroused the French to expect tidings. The first who brought any, was General Mack himself, who arrived breathless, galloping on the heels of the officer whom he had despatched to announce his approach. From the constitution of the Austrian General's nerves, of which the reader has been enabled to judge, it may be supposed that the Lazzaroni insurrection lost none of its horrors in his narration. He prayed of Championnet to march instantly to the relief of the city: Duvivier earnestly seconded the request. But Championnet paused, aware that such mad insurgents would not fail to offer some speedy provocation; nay, perhaps, that their ardour might induce them to venture forth into the plain against him, where his cavalry and artillery might annihilate them, with comparatively little loss on his part—a success by no means so probable, were he to attack them in their intricate and crowded city.

The event showed his sagacity. The Lazzaroni did sally forth into the open country, and broke through the armistice by a tumultuary attack upon the French at Ponte Rotto. This was what Championnet expected: the whole army was immediately put in motion, and orders were given that it should march without halt or let into Naples, dispersing the wild rabble from before it. The French general, however, reasoned without his host, in thus contemning the Italian rabble. For three whole days and nights did this undisciplined band keep the French in check. In vain did the artillery sweep them from before it,—in vain did the French cavalry charge amidst the rout. Disorder, which would have caused a disciplined body to fly immediately, was but the nature of this horde; and the Lazzaroni still held their ground and fought, regardless when or how oft the enemy pierced their masses, or whether they were charged in front or flank. There certainly never was a mob in

Europe that behaved so gallantly ; yet this is the race and the nation which we are accustomed to regard as pusillanimous.

It was not until the evening of the third day of continued fighting, that the French succeeded in driving the thinned body of the Lazzaroni within their city. The former, in their impetuosity, drove in as far as the Piazza Capuana ; but the Neapolitans returned to the contest with renewed courage, and compelled their enemies to retreat.

The besieging army lay that night around Naples, prepared at the dawn of day to attack it on every side. In the valley between the two hills, called the Capo di Monte and the Capo di Chino, General Duvivier was stationed, Championnet and his staff occupying the palace on one of the summits above him. It was an anxious hour for the young General, the more so, as no doubt a care for the morrow's success weighed upon his mind, or counteracted the force of his private feelings. The

event could not be doubtful: Naples, at the cost of more or less blood, must fall into the hands of the republic. But his own hopes? Vittoria?—Amongst the hundred possibilities and probabilities that his fancy suggested, which was the most probable, the most to be expected? He hung over his doubts as over a precipice; his brain grew dizzy, his nerves became unstrung with the fearful contemplation.

Kniaskinski, whose gallantry in every encounter was conspicuous, and who, ceasing to be a rival of Duvivier's in aught but arms, shared disinterestedly his anxiety for Vittoria's fate, had taken a captive, in one of his late charges, and had brought expressly the "live Lazzaro," as the Pole called him, to his friend. But no tidings could be extracted from him: nought but menaces of blood and bigotry would the fellow utter. When about to be released by the generosity of his captor, the ruffian drew a hidden stiletto, and made a desperate blow at the person of the General. It

was luckily parried; and the Polish officer, snatching a lance from one of his followers, transfixed the assassin ere he could repeat the blow. "*San Gennaro sia benedétto*—Blessed be Saint Januarius," ejaculated the martyr—for no less he esteemed himself—as he expired.

Championnet, who had been making the round of all the posts, came up at the instant. The circumstance was related to him.

"Ah!" said he, "this Saint rules them; we shall never be masters of Naples, without either more blood than she is worth, or else the alliance of his Saintship."

"And pray, General, how is that to be arranged?" said the Pole. "I would go willingly ambassador, did I know the route to yon encampment of twinkling stars."

"Poh!" said Championnet, "your saints are but terrestrial gods. And, I warrant you, with crying *Viva San Gennaro*, and placing a guard of honour at his Saintship's door, we will charm the Lazzaroni into quiet. You,

Kniaskinski, have the courage, but not the address, to penetrate amongst this horde and try this talisman. But you, Duvivier, are equal to it. Try, to-morrow."

"I will not fail to execute your commands, General," replied Duvivier. "But I wished to ask you, is there no emissary newly come from the city with tidings of how affairs go on? If so, I would gladly speak a word with him, respecting a prelate that has taken refuge in Naples——"

"With his niece," said Championnet, smiling. "Caraffa comes to me at midnight, I hope, to inform us that the heights of the Castle of St. Ermo are in the hands of the patriots for us. When we have seen him you may question him."

Long ere the bells of Naples tolled midnight, Duvivier was on the summit of Capo di Monte. The feeble rays of starlight left the gloom around undissipated; and all the charms of that lovely spot were shrouded, although the

loftiness of the site and the fragrance of the surrounding orange-groves, might have indicated to a mind sufficiently at ease to reason on such points, the hidden beauties of the scene. Naples lay below, discovered by the tremendous hum that rose from it, and which, has risen at all hours during many ages from this populace, loquacious, and wakeful city, though perhaps never so loud as at that moment. Noisy as it was, few lights were seen to illumine its streets or windows; and the continued clamour seemed more fearful from the darkness, whence it issued. Afar off Vesuvius shed a lurid light upon the sky above it, and throughout the cloud—whether of smoke or vapour was uncertain—that wreathed its summit. The volcano had shown symptoms of eruption in this very critical moment, as if willing to take part in the tumult that agitated its kingdom. The Lazzaroni blessed the mountain for thus taking part with San Genaro, as they were ready to construe its erup-

tion; whilst the patriots invoked it in the Jacobin stanza of Monti which heads our last chapter; and, in spite of their anti-superstition, could not help regarding its throes as ominous. A nearer and more sudden conflagration at this moment startled both French and Neapolitans. This came from the shipping in the harbour, the remains of the Royal navy, which it had been found impossible to man, or remove to Sicily. By the orders of Nelson and the Viceroy, they were therefore set fire to, lest they should fall into the hands of the French. And this additional mortification was inflicted upon the deserted and unhappy inhabitants of Naples.

Caraffa had, in the mean time, been with Championnet, and had brought the welcome tidings which the commander expected. The Castle St. Ermo was in his hands; and the patriots were ready to descend from thence on the morrow to co-operate with the French in their attack on the Lazzaroni. As the kind

of hurried council broke up, Duvivier took Caraffa aside, and questioned him respecting the objects of his anxiety.

“ For the Cardinal Colonna,” said Caraffa, “ I can assure you of his remaining still at Naples. One of our emissaries saw him this evening in the midst of the insurgents, and talking earnestly with Michele—the *Capo Lazzaro* himself, joining the wisdom of his grey hairs to the daring courage of these ruffians. Him we shall find on the morrow, no doubt.”

“ But his niece, Count, the Signora—the Princess Vittoria—heard you, is she still with him ?”

“ My face, you know, General, has not been seen at Court, where Vittoria Colonna was, I have heard, and in no pleasant predicament. One report says, that the Queen became jealous of her charms, and caused her to be conveyed on board the English ships ; but, as her majesty betook herself to the same

floating prisons soon after, it is not likely that she retained there the former object of her jealousy."

"Good Heaven! then, is she borne away—gone—separated for ever?"

"Nay, verily, General Duvivier, I do believe not. I have heard even of her having been seen in Naples since the flight of our Lazzaro king; but where, or in what circumstances, escapes me. In these tumultuous times we reck little for the fate of princesses."

"If ye did, Count, your swords might not be the less trenchant."

"Our brains, however, might be somewhat less clear, you'll allow?"

"Not a jot. The mind which is absorbed in one thought, is far more likely to grow dull, than that which is alternately excited by several. And patriotism or ambition, whichever you call—— But, good night, Count Caraffa."

"To-morrow, General Duvivier."

The information of Caraffa added in equal quantity hope and fear to those feelings already pretty nearly balanced in the mind of Duvivier. He paused, and pondered for a short time on the subject; but at length, seeing that reflection could not incline the scale to either side, and that to-morrow would, in all probability, put an end to his suspense at least, he abandoned the train of thought, shutting it out by a strong exertion of will, to which the reproach of Caraffa had roused him. Descending to his tent, the General flung himself on his camp-couch; and the beat to arms, ere rise of sun, first woke him from slumber.

The dispositions of the French General were made. Duhesme advanced from one quarter, Duvivier from another. Rusca was to clear the bridge of the Maddalena, and invest the fort of the Carnione. The patriots prepared to descend from St. Ermo. As the sun rose on the horizon, there was a pause,

however, whilst Championnet despatched his aid-de-camp to the Lazzaroni, offering them protection and honour if they would yield.—For answer, the aid-de-camp received a shower of balls; the tocsin sounded, and the undaunted rabble, not awaiting the attack of the enemy, rushed on all sides to their assault.

The conflict that ensued was desperate and sanguinary: courage on either side could not have been strained to a higher pitch. The discipline and military superiority of the French, enabled them to gain ground gradually over heaps of their slain foes, and to compress the living ones into the narrow circle of the lower part of the city. But the desperation of the Lazzaroni only seemed to increase as, from each extremity, they beheld their comrades driven back upon them. The few disciplined troops in their party consisting of a body of Swiss, and another of Albanians, kilted and plaided like our Scotch re-

giments, and therefore known by the name of *Camiciotti*, displayed the courage that is incumbent upon mercenaries in a foreign country; and with their aid, the retreat and defence of the Neapolitans was conducted with more effect, and more peril to their enemies.

The combat had raged from morning until noon. The French had penetrated on all sides into the city—had invested the fort of Carnione on one side: the heights of St. Ermo on the other, were theirs through the means of Caraffa; and the patriots, pouring down upon the Toledo, opened the way for their allies to occupy that principal street of the metropolis. Beaten, and hemmed in on all sides, the Lazzaroni entertained no thoughts of surrender; but barricading the streets, and stationing themselves in doors and windows, they prepared to dispute every inch of ground that still remained to them, resolved, all of them, not to survive their city, and the glories of its saint, Januarius.

Duvivier deemed the fit moment arrived for executing the orders of Championnet. He had gained, along with the commander himself, the Piazza della Signe; and, as the French advanced, some of the unarmed rabble—for whom, indeed, there was scarcely room in the still besieged quarter, so thick and crowded were its defenders—wandered round their enemies, whom they expected, like the Spaniards of old, to behold with tails and cloven feet, and were surprised to find human-looking Christians like themselves. Separating himself with a few stout grenadiers from the ranks, and elevating a white kerchief on the point of a lance, Duvivier advanced boldly amongst the insurgents, crying “Peace, parley, long live Saint Januarius!” Thiebault followed the example, as did Championnet himself. On hearing their saint thus hailed, many gathered round the officers, who each harangued his separate crowd as forcibly and adroitly as their talents and Italian allowed.

“The sole, earthly purpose,” they declared, “for which they had marched all the way from Paris to Naples, was to pay their devotions to San Gennaro—to worship the saint, and respect his votaries.” Liberty too they promised with emphasis; but, as the good Lazzaroni did not seem either to understand or value the jargon of fraternization, honour to saints, priests, and religion, was promised instead.

Their eloquence, garnished at intervals with the chorus of *Viva San Gennaro!* subdued the crowd, whom their arms could not conquer. “To San Gennaro, to the church of San Gennaro!” became the mingled cry of French and Lazzaroni; and Duvivier, followed by the grenadiers, whom he destined as a guard of honour for the saint, advanced, through the intricate streets of the lower part of the city, and their clamorous throng, to the holy abode of the patron saint of Naples. It was a service of danger: the far crowds through which

he made his way, as yet ignorant, or tardily informed of the cause or circumstances of this sudden amity. Michele, however, the *Capo-Lazzaro*, adhered to the General's side ; and by his exertions and explications, soothed the heated passions of his followers, and enabled Duvivier to reach the *Chiesa San Gennaro* in safety. Placing double sentinels at the saint's portal, in the midst of the acclamations of the Lazzaroni, the General entered the church. The priests were at their station by the altar, having chosen that place of security amongst the perils of a stormed city. Approaching them with devout aspect and humble demeanour, the French General craved that the miracle of the great saint, viz. the liquefaction of his blood, might be performed for his edification, and for that of his comrades, who besought the protection of the saint and his ministers, in thus entering his chosen city. The acclamations on this redoubled. As reports of the General's con-

duct gained the piazza without, the shouts were thence re-echoed, and running through the city, caused a mutual suspense of havoc on both sides.

Duvivier, however, soon found that all peril was not past; and that the priesthood were enemies not to be won upon by the same means as their flock. The preparations for the desired miracle went on tardily; the populace, as well as the French grew impatient, and ill humour began to return. The sacred phial, containing the blood of the saint, was at length produced; and, held up to the view, seemed to contain a red, opaque, solid substance. It was placed upon the altar, and the usual ceremony of prayers, kneelings, incense-burnings, and blessings, were gone through; but, strange! the contents of the phial still remained solid as before; the saint was not propitious. The Lazzaroni grumbled, grew discontent, and muttered that they had been deceived into amity with heretics and ene-

mies of San Gennaro. General Duvivier and his few followers felt their situation critical. In a crowded church, surrounded as they were, resistance or escape was impossible ; and, if the phial remained inexorably fixed for five minutes longer, their massacre was inevitable. Duvivier too, thought that he had, for an instant, perceived the countenance of the Cardinal Colonna, his hated enemy, amongst the ecclesiastics that thronged the altar and the sacristy, although it had since disappeared. It mattered little who was the cause of the saint's malignance, when the effect appeared now to be so imminent and final. The gabble of the Lazzaroni grew loud and ferocious—the proposals of some to lay hold upon the infidels were even heard—when General Duvivier stepped forward suddenly—and, as if struck with penitence for his past unbelieving life, which now irritated the saint to withhold his countenance, sunk upon the steps of the altar on his knees. The ecclesi-

astics seemed so to interpret his motions ; and their chief archbishop, or bishop as he might be, approached the General, in order to receive his vows of penitence and recantation of error. In this opinion, however, he at least was undeceived. Duvivier seized his robes as he bent down, laid his hand upon one of the pistols in his belt, and, in lieu of confession, whispered this to the churchman :—

“ *Que le miracle soit fait*—let the miracle be done—let the stuff in yon bottle liquefy instantly, or by the true blood of the saint, I’ll shoot you dead. You have destined us to perish, holy sir, I shall take care you lead the way.”

In a tremour the ecclesiastic arose from the confession of his penitent—the fervour and sincerity of whom, had a manifest and speedy effect upon the benevolence of the saint. The phial was removed to another part of the altar, most probably to a heated slab prepared for the purpose ; and when taken up from thence,

and held forth to the congregation, lo! the dull, fixed red of the caked blood was changed to the deeper tint of the liquid.

“*Miracolo! Miracolo!*—a miracle, a miracle,” shouted the populace;—“*Viva San Gennaro! vivano I Francesi!*—live St. Januarius—long live the French—death to the Jacobins:”—And with these exclamations, denoting, that although there was peace with the French, there still remained enemies, on whom their vengeance was to exert itself; the rabble rushed forth, leaving Duvivier free, the conqueror and pacificator of Naples.

Championnet had by this time made his way to the head-quarters of his Saintsip, as he said; and embracing Duvivier, thanked and congratulated him upon his success.—“Your public duty has been well fulfilled, Duvivier, look now to your private, and take what force you will. I myself will look to San Gennaro.”

Duvivier was thankful for the kind consid-

eration of his commander; but whither to direct his search he knew not. Force he did not need, or would not take. It shamed him to lead moustached fellows on such an errand. So, content with the company and aid of the faithful Forêt, our hero turned from the Cathedral of St. Januarius, blindly, in search of Vittoria.

Obeying his first impulse, Duvivier plunged into the heart of the city, whither he scarcely knew. After a time it occurred to him, that Michele, the Capo-Lazzaro, who had acted rather a friendly part towards him in the tumult, would be the personage most likely to afford him information or aid, perhaps, if he required it. In the bustle occasioned by the miracle, Michele had disappeared however; perhaps upon the worthy errand of pacifying his comrades; and now Duvivier inquired after him in vain. As he penetrated on this quest into the intricate and remote parts of the city, he found that tranquillity was not as yet

restored. Armed and angry groupés of insurgents met him from time to time, and seemed only prevented from falling upon the French officer by his earnest demands to see their chief, Michele. Women too, thronged the streets, all with children in their arms, seeking their friends and husbands—screaming, praying, demanding share of plunder, or urging their sufficiently ferocious spouses to fresh feats of atrocity. As the General's devious and inactive course turned by chance towards the right, and so conducted him amongst the palaces and habitations of the higher orders, the confusion increased. The work of plunder went on unremittingly. No French troops seemed as yet to have penetrated so far; and the Lazzaroni were opposed in their devastations, by their *patriot* countrymen only, the republicans, who had descended from St. Ermo in aid of the French, and who, on the part of the Lazzaroni, were by no means included in the kind of hurried peace

just entered into, or understood. Partial combats every where took place; and the sword of Duvivier was again unsheathed, in many instances to save the fallen.

In one of these skirmishes he observed an unfortunate warrior, who, in attempting to traverse the street alone, was assailed first by one party then by the other—defending himself from both with unusual address and bravery. He was clad in the royal uniform of Naples, and seemed an officer of rank. With a tacit observation upon the dangers of neutrality, the General, struck with his mien and gallantry, advanced to his aid; but ere he could arrive, the brave officer had fallen, and the Lazzaroni had already appropriated to themselves a part of his spoils. The sabres of Duvivier and Forêt soon dispersed the plunderers; they raised the wounded man from the ground, and both instantly recognised him as General De Damas. The unfortunate emigré had been attacked by the patriots as a royalist, and by the insur-

gents as a Frenchman, or perhaps merely as a promising object of plunder.

“ Shoot me, sir—shoot, me,” cried the emigré, “ whether ye have malice or mercy. Let me not fall into the hands of my countrymen.”

“ You are in the hands of friends and countrymen, De Damas.”

“ Duvivier?”

“ The same—your old acquaintance of Otricoli and Orbitello.”

“ Ah ! to be jostled to death between combatants, that care not for me as friend or foe—it is a fate that fits my life.”

Duvivier said nothing, whatever were his thoughts.

“ Nay, speak out—upbraid me, brother, if you will. I am at the pass when truth may be spoken to me.”

“ Come, come, my friend, we must think of saving, not upbraiding you. Are there boats upon the beach, think you? There

must be," continued the Colonel, answering his own question ; " and some ships of Nelson linger in the offing still, to save such noble fugitives. Come, my sick countrymen,—there, Forêt, bear him. We will be your legs, De Damas, if thou do but direct us ; for we have already lost our way, not unfortunately for thee, in this labyrinth."

Thus they set forth, bearing De Damas, who pointed out the way towards the sea-shore ; shunning the Mole, however, which was the nearest point of shore, but so beset with rabble and Lazzaroni, that to embark from thence would be impossible. They therefore crossed the Toledo, and directed their steps towards the beach, on the other side of the Royal Palace.

On arriving there, boats were found in crowds, many full of fugitive royalists, already pushing forth to join the vessels in the distance. De Damas was soon placed in one ; and, as Duvivier saw it quit the beach, he

rejoiced that his brave countryman was saved, and his debt of gratitude repaid.

“ This is better than blowing your brains out, bad as times are,” said Duvivier, by way of adieu.

“ Scarcely,” replied the emigré, “ and yet I must thank you the more. *Adieu*, I will not say, *au revoir*.”

While thus engaged, it did not escape Duvivier’s attention, that the Lazzaroni were still in possession of the neighbouring Castle or Fort *dell’ Ovo*, or of the Egg, and that some scene of violence was going on within its walls. Several boats were moored close under it, of which the crews seemed expecting some chief freight or passengers from the Castle.

Alive to every sound, now that he was relieved from the care of the emigré’s safety, and hoping, moreover, to find the *Capo-Lazzaro* in the fortress, the General bent his steps to its portal. A sailor-like sentinel denied him entrance, although he would not deny at

the same time that Michele was within the Castle. There is a long bridge or wooden passage that connects the fort with the shore, and the sentinel being separated by this from Duvivier overthrew him at once, and passed on. The sound of angry voices came from the fort, despite its thick battlements—nay, that of woman, mingled with the clamour. Woman ! what should she do in this stronghold of war ? The two Frenchmen rushed on prostrated or slew another surly sentinel, sprung up the battlements—an iron door barring their straight-forward progress—and thence descended upon the wordy war below.

The scene that then presented itself to the astonished Duvivier, was—Vittoria Colonna, his betrothed mistress, kneeling at the feet of Michele, and beseeching him in tones that evidently melted the Lazzaro's heart, although they changed not his purpose. The Cardinal Colonna held his niece, or rather seemed in the act of dragging her, whilst the rabble fol-

lowers of Michele stood around, to second his determinations, if required.

“Hear me, Michele,” pleaded Vittoria: “You have acted nobly and honourably by me, hitherto,—nay, promised that neither king nor chief should harm the daughter of the Constable. And now you deliver me to my uncle here, the most cruel of my enemies, who seeks to bear me away with all the fugitives that have abandoned you.”

“He gives good reasons,” said the Lazzaro. “—What would become of me, if I went against his Eminence? or what would San Gennaro there above say of his *Capo-Lazzaro*? Give over weeping, lovely Signora. Leave your cares to the Virgin, and she will aid you—for Michele cannot.”

“Who detains the Princess Colonna a prisoner?” shouted Duvivier, flashing his sabre as he descended, followed and echoed by Forêt. The Cardinal shrunk back; and Vittoria, with a shriek of joy and surprise, rushed to her lover’s arms.

Rejoicing, however, was premature, as Michele and his gang, if not won upon by entreaty, were less likely to yield to merely two foes, however valiant and determined. Blows were exchanged instantaneously. Stiletto and sabre clashed together, whilst the cries and endeavours of both Vittoria and her faithful Domenico were vainly employed, almost overlooked in the fury of the combat. The Cardinal alone had composure to watch the event; and as it became doubtful, a smile of satisfaction settled on his pale, worn, and sinister-looking features.

It was the evening of that day of conquest. The tricolor flag floated upon every battlement in Naples. The victorious French pledged each other in the joyous cup. Italy was theirs. The last stroke had been struck—the last blood spilt for it on that day; and even the regret for the gallant comrades who did not appear at that festive board, seemed, instead of marring, to add a zest to the joviality of the survivors.

Duvivier was not there. Extended upon the beach, and supported in the arms of Domenico, he at length aroused himself from the state of insensibility into which he had been stunned. “ Vittoria,” cried he ; but the chill and gloom around—the sea rolling at his feet—his situation in the arms of Domenico—his langour told him all. Daylight still glimmered. Not much more than an hour had elapsed since he had rushed into the fort. He turned his eyes towards the sea ; and Domenico silently pointed to a gloomy sail that could still be descried in the distance.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Non rispose l' Eroe, ma trasse il brando,
E alla vendetta del materno affanno
Il Marengo discese fulminando,
Mancò alle stragi il Campo ; l' Alemanno
Sangue endeggiava e d'un sol dì la sorte
Valse di sette e sette lune il danno.”

MONTI—MASCHERONIANA.

OUR narrative, which, hitherto, like a rock detached from a height, has held on its downward course uninterruptedly, must here take a last bound ere it sinks to rest. The capture of Naples took place in January, seventeen-hundred and ninety-nine, and at that period Italy appeared to have fallen irrevocably under the dominion of the French. Fate, however, seems to have fixed an invariable destiny for all

French invasions of the Italian peninsula—success, victory, conquest at first, to be followed by a reverse, bringing flight, defeat, and disappointment. Scarcely had the General in command at Naples, Macdonald—Championnet having been recalled in disgrace by the Directory—succeeded in restoring peace to the conquered kingdom, ere yet the constitution of the *Republique Parthenopéenne* had been agreed upon, or its executive chiefs inaugurated, when Suwarrow, with a powerful army of Russians, burst upon the north of Italy, driving the French General, Scheren, and, afterwards, Moreau, before him.

Macdonald, in consequence, received orders to evacuate Naples, and retreat as speedily as possible to join Moreau in the north. This order, with the adverse tidings that occasioned it, reached Naples early in May; and Macdonald, soon after raising his camp, retired towards Rome.

These were new sources of regret and pain to General Duvivier, not only on account of

his country and his self-love, but, that during the three months of repose enjoyed by the army at Naples, he had been led to hope, that some of his bold emissaries would discover Vittoria Colonna in her Sicilian prison or retreat ; and either forcibly rescue her, or, by stratagem, afford her the means of escape. The order to evacuate Naples, with the noise of Suwarrow's victories, came like a thunderclap to startle him from his quiet hopes ; and the clouds of disaster that rolled in after, and enveloped the French, cast a shade too dark for love to bask in. Other, and more immediate hopes and fears, than those of losing or possessing his mistress, occupied his breast. Prospect and retrospect were sad. France, the hitherto invincible France, now worsted, and menaced with invasion—her boasted liberty tottering—her past victories erased:—all through the fool-hardy enterprise of one man, who fascinated his country to trust in him ; and who, in bearing away her legions, had shorn France of her strong locks, and left her at the mercy

of her enemies. The brave saw that their blood had been spilled in vain—a mortifying thought, however, that the sanguine and mercurial temperament of French soldiers did not allow them long to dwell on. They retired as they had advanced, recklessly and gaily. But Duvivier, who had exchanged some of the lightness of his national character, for Italian earnestness and passion, felt that he now differed from his comrades. Combat made him no longer gay, but savage ; hardship made him morose ; and the idea always present, however little time was allowed to indulge in it, of hopes for ever blasted, caused him to value life less. The perils which he was wont to court and brave, from mere youthful ardour, he now dared from temerity.

The retreat of the French was not unmolested : Ruffo raised the Calabrese—the English landed at Castelamare—and the return of Ferdinand and his queen, with Nelson, to the shores of Naples, was followed by acts of atrocity that I shall not dwell on. Captain

Trowbridge, with a body of marines, *proh pudor!* took imperial Rome, where the Neapolitans once more established their rule. Cardinal Colonna too, with the united pomp of cardinalate and principedom, took possession of the many palaces and possessions of his family. His niece, Vittoria, did not appear under his protection. Mention was not even made of her, unless in whispers by the domestics; and their reports were various—some assigning a convent on Mount Etna as the place of her imprisonment, some a cavern in the Lipari isles, well known as a state prison, whilst others even went so far as to suspect, that the daughter of Colonna had been sold as a slave to Tunis; and this latter account, as most romantic, seemed to harmonize best with the credulity of the *basse cour*.

In the meantime, Macdonald approached Genoa in his retreat, where he formed the daring plan of raising the blockade of Mantua, and cutting Suwarrow's line of operations. In the attempt and partial failure of this,

owing to some hesitation on the part of Moreau, the French displayed more daring, obstinacy, and military virtue, than were shown, perhaps, in the more bruited victories of the period. At the Trebbia, on the very spot where Sempronius was defeated by Hannibal, Macdonald was defeated in an engagement far more sanguinary and terrific, by Suwarrow, whose numbers nearly doubled those of the French. The fugitive Poles more especially exerted themselves on that day against the destroyers of their country's liberty. The whole left wing of the army, which consisted of them, was cut off by the Russians, and fell, to a man, our poor friend Kniaskinski amongst the number. There was a council of officers immediately after the battle, and not one had escaped unwounded. Macdonald himself was borne in a litter, and Duvivier had added painfully to the number of his scars.

The French still fled. Genoa was invested. The last struggle for Piedemont was made at Novi, where Joubert was killed at the

head of his army ; and the fortunes of France yet declined, till even her bravest sons despaired of retrieval.

The summer's sun of the year eighteen hundred shone upon Italy, yet in the hands of her northern invaders. Suwarrow with his Russians, it is true, had quitted the scene of his first conquests ; but in his place, the Austrians, under General Melas, occupied Lombardy and Piedmont. Massena had just surrendered Genoa, the last strong-hold of the French in the peninsula ; and Melas was advancing to surround and annihilate the audacious army, which, he now learned to his astonishment, had crossed the Alps to strike another and a final blow to decide the fate of Italy.

It was the month of June. General Duvivier, with two followers merely, traversed impatiently the road which leads from Genoa, northwards, towards either Turin or Milan. He was much altered : the robust and ruddy soldier was now thin and wan ; the frank and

careless air with which he was first introduced to the reader, was gone ; the boldness remained, but it was that of impatience—not the cool, natural temper of the mind. He had been shut up in Genoa during the long and severe siege which Massena had there sustained ; and his sufferings from famine, hardship, and the enmity of his commander, had worn him down in mind and body. A year's series of disasters had not subdued his martial spirit ; but it was no longer that of confidence so natural to Frenchmen—it was rather the gallantry of the forlorn-hope, alike despairing and reckless of the future.

Thoughts of Vittoria he had abandoned. The probable distance that separated them, the enmity of her relatives, all these obstacles did not fright away his affection. He reasoned merely, that such aspiring as his to the hand of the Princess Colonna, did not become the vanquished. Defeat, indeed, interfered more seriously with his hopes, than in thus touching and abating his pride ; but the young

General felt it in no other way. His country too, he reasoned, as she now called for the aid of all her sons, called also upon those sons to fling away all other affections than those of patriotism—all thoughts which marred or interfered with the great end of her safety, and the recovery of her glory. The word *Liberty* he did not repeat: that talisman had lost its charm, and ceased to rouse, as it had been wont, the passions of every Frenchman. That idol—such they had erected it, and such they found it—had become less and less respected; till, at length, General Buonaparte, in November of the last year, had pushed the idol “from its stool”—driven the legislature from their place of sitting at the point of the bayonet, and elected himself First Consul, instead of them and of all authority.

From this exposure of his state of mind, the train of reflection, with which, in truth, he did not beguile the fatigue of his journey, may be conceived. He passed Arguata, famed for the massacre of many hundreds of his compatriots,

quartered there in the beginning of the war ; and the field of Novi, the grave of the young and gallant Joubert, gave him food for meditation bitterer still. Here the Austrian commander, after having examined his pass, which declared him an envoy sent, according to the terms of the armistice, from Genoa to the French army, forbade him to pursue further the road to Alexandria, under the walls of which General Melas lay with his collected forces, but directed him to pursue that towards Tortona, as most likely to bring him to the head-quarters of the French.

Rejoiced to have passed the Austrian lines, Duvivier journeyed on, and soon fell in with a detachment of his countrymen. It proved to be part of the left wing of the army, commanded by Desaix. Duvivier embraced his old comrade, then just returned from Egypt, and questioned him respecting the state of affairs.

“ No hope of a decisive action yet, at least in the opinion of our commander, else he

would not have detached me here, so far to the left. You bring him but sorry news : Genoa's surrender will chafe his temper, which his Egyptian campaign has not improved. But on—no time is to be lost.—You will find his head-quarters at the Torre di Gurafola, ere you reach Tortona.”

Duvivier proceeded, viewing, as he rode on, the immense plain of Marengo on his left, covered with tents, and bivouacs, and armed masses. “ A fitter spot than this,” thought he, “ nations could not pitch upon, whereon to decide their quarrels. And it may well be. For Melas makes no demonstrations of moving southwards, whatever the commander may suppose.”

He reached head-quarters at the fall of day ; and only dismounted from his horse to be conducted to the presence of the First Consul.

Duvivier had served under Buonaparte in his early Italian campaigns, and remembered well his thin, spare, diminutive figure, that

VITTORIA COLONNA.

and as if it scarcely would admit of further
ation. His person, nevertheless, was
ore worn; his cheek sunken and sal-
his very animal spirits exhausted,—what
he Egyptian sun, and the anxiety for
t he had at stake.* Duvivier started
surprise on beholding him; and the
Consul smiled, and seemed by his stare
ly—I might return the compliment.
Bonaparte had a great dislike
een calm. He seemed conscious that
ted dignity in that state; and his first
s always sought a pretext to stir up his
ns: he strove to ruffle his plumage, like
birds, that he might seem terrible;
e grew so accustomed to this artificial
f temper, that it at length became na-
to him. At present, however, there was
d of artificially exciting his anger; the
despatch, brought by Duvivier from

magis, si pallido, si macilentis," writes one who saw
his period.

Massena, was quite sufficient, either as cause or pretext. Genoa had surrendered whilst he, the First Consul, was marching to its relief !

Words could not do justice to the first explosion of his resentment. His eyes scintillated, his body shook, although his cheek retained its sallow hue unchanged ; and upsetting in his rage the table before him, with a world of charts and plans, he exclaimed, “ What do I here? Come to rescue knaves, who cannot hold an impregnable fortress against Austrians and English. Now, by Allah !” continued he, forgetting the latitude and the gods of the spot where he was, “ Massena shall pay me for this.”

“ Stomachs, Citizen-consul, could hold no longer,” said Duvivier.

“ *Tais-toi!* a soldier should live on air, when the fate of kings and kingdoms are at stake.”

“ He may die honourably upon such allowance, but it will not help him to man a breach

I am known as no friend to General Massena; and yet——”

“And who, Sir General, gave you liberty to declare yourself no friend to your Commander?” cried the Consul, glad to grasp at another cause of spleen, calling to mind, at the same time, Duvivier’s insubordination of old, and his free ideas. “*Sacristie !* it is this mutinous spirit that has disorganized the army of Italy, and been the cause of all its disasters.”

Duvivier was not a little chafed at hearing the disasters of the French arms, owing altogether to the mad expedition of Buonaparte himself to Egypt, thus charged upon the gallant remnant that had been left behind to encounter an overwhelming force of foes. “Our diminished numbers,” said he, “might stand as a sufficient cause——”

“Peace, again, sir !—’twas your dissensions that raised up enemies,—dissensions in your armies, dissensions in your councils—arguments, and discussion, and weakness every

where ; but we will have no more of it. Do you hear me, sir? we will have no more of each man setting up for himself,—no Jacobinism, civil or military,—no agitators,—no tribunes of the Roman people, or of any people, sir,—you understand me ?”

“ Me, a tribune——”

“ We will have no aristocrat and Jacobin united, sir,” continued the Consul, “ wooing princesses forsooth, and winning them by exciting popular seditions.”

“ How ? am I then accused ?” cried Duvivier.

“ Yes, and judged. I have proofs: witnesses, a throng of them are at Milan.—*You* like not General Massena, indeed !”

Duvivier was hot-tempered, high, and had met few, however stout and bold of front, whom he could not overmaster : I do not speak of force, or a trial of physical strength, but that sort of spiritual or mental struggle for superiority which takes place between man and man, is carried on by demeanour, words, and

glances,—and yet, despicable as seem the weapons, is an ordeal by battle, by which, if not the justice of a cause, at least might of mind is fairly tried, and the inferior spirit, however bold, is quelled beneath the glance of its superior, all as sensibly as if sword or spear had decided the question of physical prowess.

Whether this was the cause in the present case, whether Duvivier had been abated of his vigour by famine and suffering, or whether he acquiesced in the partial truth of all with which he was accused, the young general attempted no more to bandy words with his commander, but stood, shrouded in all the silent dignity he could assume, awaiting the conclusion of the storm. The Consul, perceiving that the play of his artillery had silenced that of his antagonist, was pacified by the conquest, and dismissed him with re-assumed good humour.

“You will command my services in the coming action, Citizen-Consul,” said Duvivier, ere he turned to take his departure; “it is by them alone that I can hope to refute my enemies.”

“Where’s your old regiment?”

Duvivier replied by raising his shoulders.

“What, gone?—the gallant *dix-neuvieme*, that I have seen——” and the visage of the Consul relapsed an instant into the expression of regret and pain. He mastered it, and then said, “Go, go,—the brave find their places.”

The next morning, which was the fourteenth of June, Duvivier was aroused by a distant roar of cannon. The First Consul himself was equally startled: even he had not expected an attack from the Austrians; but the liveliness of the cannonade bespoke a sharp and a general one. Desaix, with the left wing, was at the distance of full six hours’ march: a greivous error of the commander’s when in the very presence of the enemy. Orders were despatched to recall him; and all—the headquarters of the First Consul being considerably in the rear—hurried on to the scene of action. Duvivier, without appointed place or command, was uncertain what corps he should

join ; he, however, galloped towards the field, leaving chance to direct him.

“ Ah ! France, my poor country ! ” cried the young General ; “ this is thy last blow—thy forlorn hope—forlorn indeed ! ”

And certes never field of battle looked more unpromising. It was, as before observed, an extensive plain, intersected at some distance in advance of the French by the course of the Bormida. Across this river Melas had burst in the early morning, announcing his attack by a furious cannonade. His army, after having passed, divided itself into three bodies, the central one of which, advancing against the village of Marengo, opposite to its point of passage, was, as Duvivier approached, in close combat with the main force of the French under Victor, who occupied the village. The fearful sight, that caused the exclamation from Duvivier, was that of the two other bodies of Austrians and Hungarians on their right, and an overwhelming force of cavalry upon their left,

the masses of which were seen moving obliquely forward, without one solitary body of French to oppose them. Desaix was far absent on one side, Monnier behind upon the other ; and when Duvivier, shuddering no longer for his country's glory, but its very existence, looked back to behold what reserve the First Consul brought up in person, and saw the Commander with his suite, and about one thousand men of his guard, more resembling a troop of horse than a reserve, as they crossed the boundless plain, he gave up all for lost, and pressed hastily forward to strike one more blow for the republic.

Before Duvivier could join the combat, Victor was completely worsted. The Austrians drove him from Marengo at the bayonet's point. His men, scattered and pouring over the plain in disorder, made it resound with the fatal cry of "*Tout est perdu !*"—all is lost. The intrepid Lannes, however, still maintained the combat, retreating, nevertheless—for to hold his ground was impossible—

but step by step, supported by the thousand men of the Consular guard, which, though insignificant in number, were able to keep in check the numerous cavalry of the enemy.

Duvivier placed himself in the ranks of the cavalry, commanded by young Kellerman, and which, by frequent charges, assisted in keeping back the enemy. The French retired scarcely in order ; the battle seemed completely lost ; and the hopes of no officer extended beyond a retreat, more or less secure. Luckily for the French, only the centre and left of the Austrians had, as yet, come into the action ; their right, consisting of Hungarians, under General Zach, having followed the bank of the Bormida, in expectation of combating the French left wing—but none such made its appearance ; and Buonaparte, by refusing, as the phrase is, or withdrawing from the left as much as possible in the retreat, avoided the attack of the Hungarians in flank, which, had it taken place, must have instantly changed the retreat into a rout.

As he had hitherto shown little generalship, so, in the present crisis of his fortune, Buonaparte showed little presence of mind. His agony, his impatience was manifest, as he sent officer after officer to hasten and bring tidings of Desaix. He was placed afterwards, at Waterloo, in a situation nearly similar; and then the recollection that Desaix, at Marengo, had come at the critical moment to his preservation, buoyed him up to the last moment with the hopes of Grouchy's appearance. His good fortune, his star, was a kind of basilisk that fascinated him, kept his powerful eye and mind fixed upon it, and did not allow them to be exerted for his army's preservation. He may be considered in a great measure to have fallen a sacrifice to this absurd and selfish superstition.

In the present instance, however, it did not fail him. 'Twas four o'clock: the French had retreated from Marengo to San Guilino. Zach, and his Hungarians, had at length reached their enemies, and were imminent upon the flank of Victor's rallied centre. One half-hour

more would have put the fates of France and Buonaparte beyond retrieval, when Desaix appeared, his men weary, but still ardent to take part in and restore the action. The impatient First Consul scarcely allowed them time to breathe: indeed he could not. He ordered them instantly to fall on Zach. The brave Desaix obeyed—advanced at the head of his divisions, when a ball struck him to the heart. His soldiers, however, slackened not their pace, and swept over the body of their dead general to mortal combat with the enemy.

The strife was fierce and long. The Hungarians did not yield to the French in obstinacy; and victory having been just before theirs, the prospect of its being reversed made them furious. The troops of the fallen Desaix, notwithstanding prodigies of valour, could make no impression upon them. They even themselves began to falter; and Buonaparte once more was about to issue orders for further retreat, when young Kellerman, aided by his friend Duvivier, having driven back, by an intrepid charge, the force opposed to

them, turned, with about eight hundred heavy horse, suddenly upon the flank of the Hungarians. They rode in, cut off the column, and the foremost ranks, already victorious, faltered in their turn, on hearing the enemy in their rear. The Hungarians gave way—Zach was a prisoner—and in one half-hour the whole face of the field changed. The division of Desaix now, in turn, took the Austrians in flank. Melas, deeming the victory won, had long since retired to write his despatches, and his second in command now in vain endeavoured to preserve any order in the retreat. The recollection of the Bormida behind them, with its scanty bridges, affording tedious passage to a routed and hotly pursued army, added speed and took away all presence of mind from the vanquished. They fled pell-mell across the plain, slaughtered by the French cavalry; and Marengo, that morning's scene of action, was repassed by fugitives and pursuers. The bridges of the Bormida were choked, and even the bed of the river encumbered with the slain. Never was victory more unexpected or more

decisive. "*Par la toute l'Italie fut conquise,*" wrote Napoleon, " by it all Italy was conquered."

In the evening of that hard-fought day, the First Consul rode, surrounded by his excellent suite, in the midst of the plain of Marengo. Strewed around were ample signs of carnage, and of the double flight. He was issuing the necessary orders, and receiving, from time to time, the congratulations of his chief officers as they rode up. His fatigued troops bivouacked around in the midst of the vapour of mingled dust and smoke, which, in the languid airs of June, had not yet disappeared from the field. Young Kellerman with Duvivier, had just returned from the banks of the Bormida, and approached the Consul.

" A good charge, that of yours, Kellerman," exclaimed Buonaparte, as he saw him—thus commending slightly a feat that had literally preserved him and his army from destruction; " a brisk charge, well supported, and in good order."

" I am glad you prize it," replied the young

warrior contemptuously, “ since it puts the crown upon your head.”

Then, indeed, the Consul’s cheek assumed a flush. Not only his selfish oversight of another’s merit but his secret ambition, being touched and laid bare by the sharp reply. He turned abruptly to Duvivier, in order to conceal his emotion, and, in terms of the utmost commendation, spoke of his part in the action—thus, perhaps, seeking to lessen and divide the share of renown due to Kellerman, whom, be it here remarked, he never forgave this scene.

The frequent interruptions, however, the bustle, and the joy attendant upon so glorious a victory, soon dissipated any unpleasant feeling that the bluntness of Kellerman had caused. The First Consul, already Emperor in his own estimation,* spoke words of graciousness and promise to all.

* In his account of the action, Buonaparte alludes to himself even then as Emperor. Speaking of the death of Desaix, he says,

“ Ce coup enleva à l’*Empereur* l’homme qu’il jugeait le plus digne de devenir son lieutenant.”

“ You, Duvivier,” said he, addressing our hero, “ I should be happy to recompense according to your merits. But I am not sole Consul, you know, nor even General here.” [Berthier bore the title of Commander-in-chief.] “ You are accused, I have before informed you, and must exculpate yourself of these charges ere you can be allowed to serve the Republic. Our enemies, vanquished and surrounded, for Suchet is in their rear, must yield themselves prisoners to-morrow. I will see you at Milan; and trust that to whichever side it may incline, you will admit the final justice of my award.”

This, spoken in no jesting tone, sounded ominously in Duvivier’s ear. He had heard long since of the resentment of both old government and new against the leader of the Roman mutiny; and Buonaparte, especially, he knew to be one, that, as De Stael expresses it, “ loved not a man capable of wielding at once a sabre and an opinion.” The First Consul’s manner to him had, nevertheless, been gracious, perhaps intimating by

that and his final menace, the alternative that he offered to the young General—either to attach himself to the Consul's party, or to expect disgrace from his power in attempting to oppose or be independent of it. Duvivier, however, much as his ardour for liberty had abated, was not one to be frowned and smiled into obsequiousness. A disappointed man too, he was prepared to brave ill fortune and malevolence, and even to find consolation in the unequal struggle.

Such were his thoughts during the few days that elapsed before the return of the First Consul to Milan. An armistice, which afterwards ended in a final treaty, was agreed on, glorious and advantageous to the French. Buonaparte re-entered Milan in triumph, and was received as became so great a conqueror. He held a court of splendour more than regal, which he was no longer anxious to fill with his old friends, the republicans and revolutionary agitators. On the contrary, he now sought to draw the rich and the noble around him, men of science, poets, and all the swarm

that naturally grace and throng the suite of a potentate. His very language was changed—his watchword was no longer “War to the castle—peace to the cottage,” but all his eloquence represented the necessity of re-edificating the shattered fabric of society, of renewing its aristocratic pillars, and of crowning it once more with its ancient capital of sovereignty.

Duvivier, all this time deaf to policy and party, awaited the menaced accusation. The First Consul tried him sufficiently by his emissaries, and finding all the agitator was dead within him, he ordered him to be summoned to his presence.

“You are accused, Duvivier,” said the Consul, fixing his eye on that of the young General, to mark if it yet betrayed any dangerous spark of independence, “of having raised mutiny in the army of Rome against its commander?”

“Is the First Consul my accuser,” asked Duvivier, “or am I to behold no other?”

“Do you suspect or refuse the friendly interference of the First Consul, I ask, in turn?”

“No, in truth. A soldier’s cause is best pleaded before a soldier. But shall I not see my accusers?”

“In good time. But first answer me, touching this mutiny. Speak they true?”

“Not altogether falsely, Citizen-Consul. I confess to have urged the army to make a stand against the *concussionnaires*, from whom you yourself, General Buonaparte, have met indignities. If wrong I have suffered for it; and St. Cyr restored me my command.”

“You are further accused of having leagued with a noble Roman house to our destruction; nay, ’tis said, that at the very moment of the malignant council plotting for the destruction of the army, you were seen to enter the Colonna walls.”

“’Tis false as hell!” replied the young officer. “Cervoni knows it to be false,—you yourself, Citizen-Consul, know it.”

“Nay, but how come these aristocratic predilections in a republican soldier?”

“I am surely not to be accused *now* of aristocratic predilections,” replied Duvivier

with emphasis. “Why, it is the mode—and no such diabolical one, perhaps, as the Jacobins would have it. For my part, I do not deem myself bound to despise worth and valour, because their possessor happens to wear a princely coronet.”

“True, my friend, true,” cried the First Consul, springing forward, and grasping Duvivier’s hand, now assured of his principles. He turned as he shook it, and called aloud, “Let the Italian claimants be introduced.”

The General was mute, astonished at the sudden cordiality of the First Consul, and expecting the entrance of Cervoni, or of some other more hidden enemy.

Instead of any such, however, he was surprised to behold a body of his Italian friends entering,—Santa Croce, Bonelli, Bassi, Guistiniani, and lastly, accompanied by the faithful Domenico, Vittoria Colonna.

The sudden discharge of an Austrian masked battery could not have been more stunning to the young Frenchman. After an instant’s pause, stupefaction, and incredul-

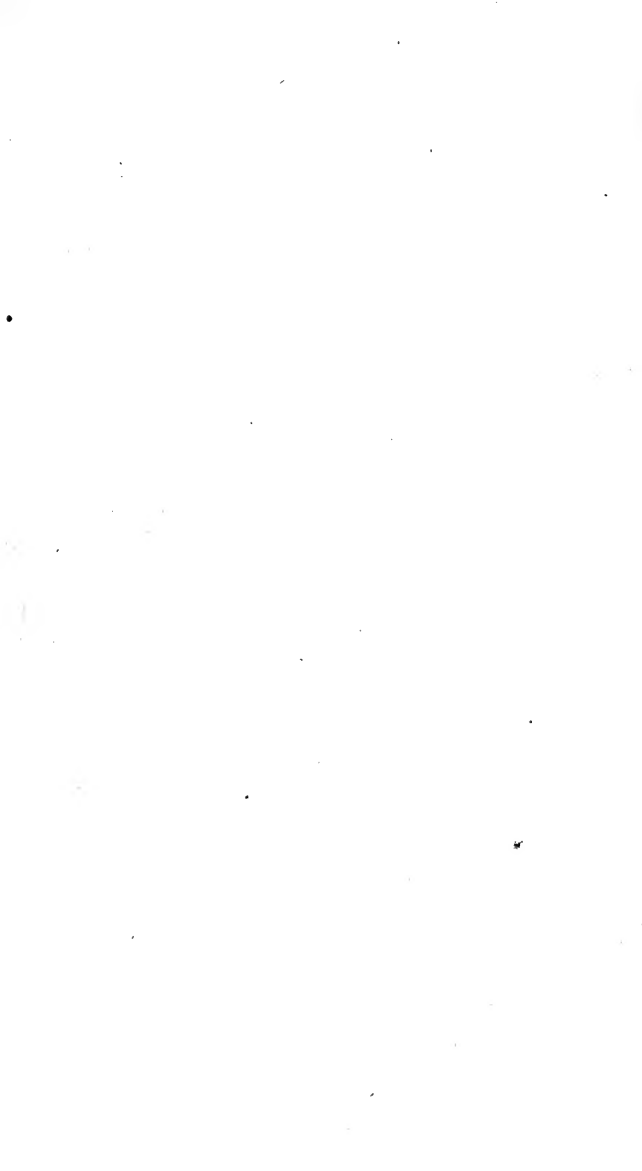
lity, he flew to meet her ; nor did she recoil. Her story was told in a word :—she had escaped, through Domenico's aid, from Palermo, had reached Milan, and flung herself at the feet of the present ruler and hero of France, to demand a restitution of her rights.

“ Hear me, my Roman friends,” said the First Consul, addressing the Italian group, “ I have ever felt a filial regard for your Immortal City. I have never entered it, and never will, until——but we leave that to fate. Meantime, we will restore to you your independence and your Pontiff ; your dream of liberty was a sorry one, from which, I trust, you are waked to think no more upon it. The time for these visionary schemes of government is past. All, nevertheless, who have suffered in our behalf shall be restored and recompensed. And here shall be your avenger and restorer, General Duvivier, to whom I intrust the duty of seeing Pope Pius the Seventh, conducted in safety and honour to Rome ; and all of you, gentlemen, reinstated in your properties and rights. You may retire,

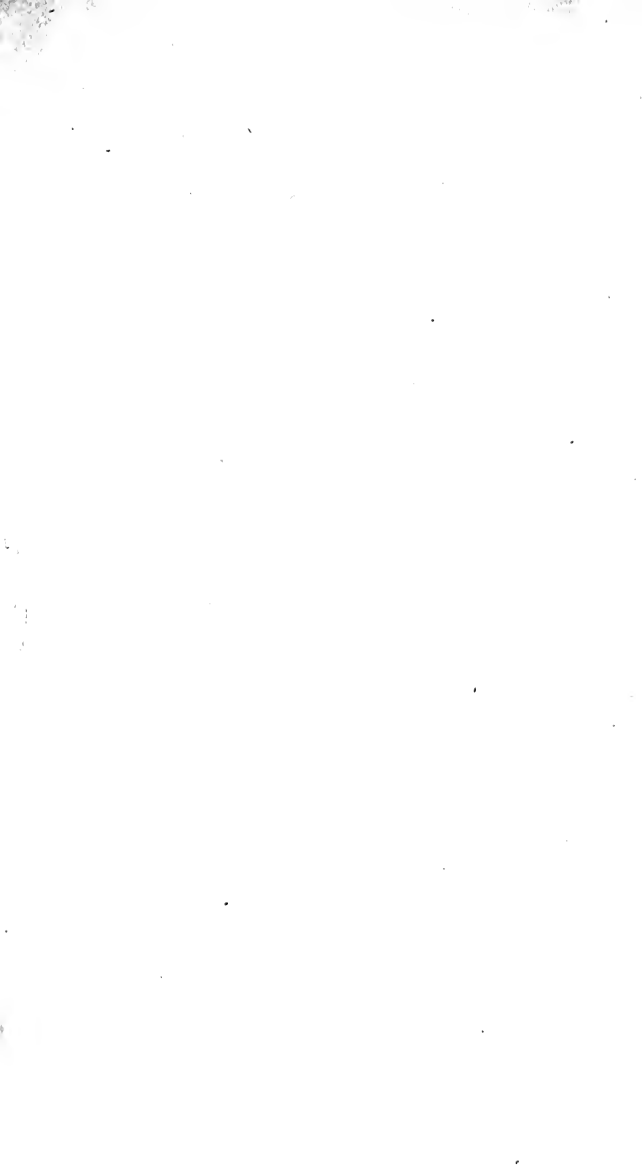
sirs ; and you also, General ; you seem not to have recovered the fatigues of this last brief campaign. You will not fail in your new office to remember the Colonnas. This lady will not need a braver champion."

The imagination of my readers may well supply the sequel, and represent the happiness of Duvivier, the supreme content of Vittoria—her hopes of patriotism, of religion, and of affection, all at once reconciled and fulfilled—and the silent tears of old Domenico. Bassi exchanged his consular robe for that of a judge in the pontifical courts, where he was as sage and impartial as his brethren. Forêt, long since an officer, became attached to Napoleon's guard. De Damas lived to revisit France once more. And whatever fortunes after-life reserved for the personages of my story, an unclouded gleam of happiness shone upon all, at the period of its termination.

THE END.







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